

School of Theology at Claremont



1001 1378385





The Library
SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY
AT CLAREMONT

WEST FOOTHILL AT COLLEGE AVENUE
CLAREMONT, CALIFORNIA



BOOKS BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

FREEDOM OF THE WILL. 12mo. \$1 50

WORKS IN TWO VOLUMES:

VOL. I. ESSAYS, REVIEWS, AND DISCOURSES. 12mo. 1 25

VOL. II. STATEMENTS, THEOLOGICAL AND CRITICAL.
12mo. 1 25

OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT COMMENTARY.

INTENDED FOR POPULAR USE.

THE NEW TESTAMENT.

BY D. D. WHEDON, LL.D.

FIVE VOLUMES. 12mo.

Per Volume, Cloth, \$1 50; Morocco, Extra, \$4 50; Half Morocco or Half
Calf, \$2 50.

VOL. I. MATTHEW AND MARK.

VOL. II. LUKE AND JOHN.

VOL. III. ACTS AND ROMANS.

VOL. IV. CORINTHIANS TO SECOND TIMOTHY.

VOL. V. TITUS AND REVELATION.

THE OLD TESTAMENT.

Edited by D. D. WHEDON, LL.D.

EIGHT VOLUMES. 12mo.

Per Volume, Cloth, - - - - - \$2 25.

VOL. I. GENESIS AND EXODUS. By Milton S. Terry, D.D., and
Fales H. Newhall, D.D.

VOL. II. (In Preparation.)

VOL. III. JOSHUA. By D. Steele, DD. JUDGES TO II SAMUEL.
By Milton S. Terry, D.D.

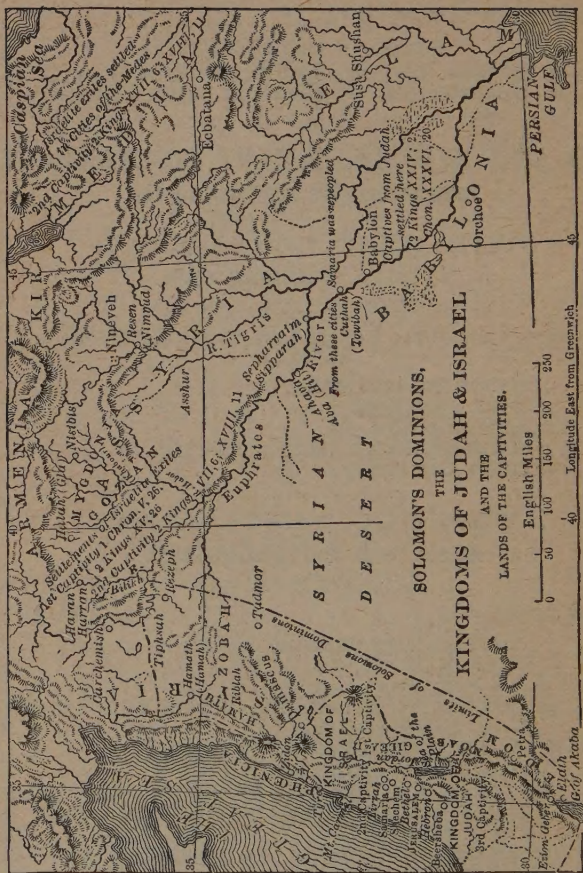
VOL. IV. KINGS TO ESTHER. By Milton S. Terry, D.D.

VOL. V. PSALMS. By F. G. Hibbard, D.D.

VOL. VI. JOB. By J. K. Burr, D.D. PROVERBS. By W. Hunter,
D.D. ECCLESIASTES AND SOLOMON'S SONG. By
A. B. Hyde, D.D.

VOL. VII. ISAIAH. By H. Bannister, D.D. JEREMIAH, AND THE
LAMENTATIONS OF JEREMIAH. By F. D. Hemen-
way, D.D.

VOL. VIII. (In Preparation.)



BS
1151
W4
1889
v. 7

COMMENTARY

ON

THE OLD TESTAMENT.

*VOL. VII.—ISAIAH, JEREMIAH, and the
LAMENTATIONS OF JEREMIAH.*

BOOK OF ISAIAH,

By H. BANNISTER, D.D.

BOOKS OF JEREMIAH AND OF THE
LAMENTATIONS,

By F. D. HEMENWAY, D.D.

D. D. WHEDON, LL.D., EDITOR.

NEW YORK: HUNT & EATON.
CINCINNATI: CRANSTON & STOWE.

Theology Library
SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY
AT CLAREMONT
California

Copyright, 1886, by
PHILLIPS & HUNT,
NEW YORK.

PUBLISHERS' NOTE.

BOTKIN LIBRARY 3, 14, 57
THE present volume of Whedon's Commentary is issued to the world without the editorial endorsement of its late honored projector. Very soon after the work was in type, and before the final reading of its proofs, Dr. Whedon was called from toil to reward. So, also, with both the richly endowed authors of the volume. They have all entered into their final rest: the results of their labor are the heritage of the Church. Two more volumes—the Pentateuch, and Ezekiel, Daniel, and the Minor Prophets—are well advanced.

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF ISAIAH.

PROPHECY, considered as a fact, demands three things to be conceded: first, that there is One personal divine Being—God—almighty, all-wise, and infinite in goodness; second, that in virtue of such predicates he is the primal cause and supporter of the universe and its intelligent occupants, between whom and himself there exist relations involving free-will and accountability in man; and third, that man becomes conscious, on misuse of his freedom, of guilt, and need of pardon—pardon not attainable through any means he can himself command.

In this exigency the question arises inevitably, Will the all-wise and benevolent Creator provide a remedy, and restore his fallen creature again to a right relation on conditions suitable to divine wisdom and goodness?

So far as is humanly presumable, he will. No antecedent reason in the divine nature appears against it; and human convictions, inborn or acquired, earnestly respond that he must do so.

A revelation, then, must be made to man of such a remedy, else God's system in relation to man would seem an abortion, conceived, as humanly seen, in unwisdom and injustice. Far be it, however, from any finite mind to entertain a conclusion so direful.

But there must accompany such a revelation accredited marks that it is truly from God. Not that divine power, wisdom, and goodness can collectively be fully made known in every message sent; but sufficient must be shown reasonably to convince that its origin is not human, but divine. The marks or criteria in question here are, that the contents of these messages show, when brought to the bar of the universal moral sense, signs of truth, purity, holiness, and goodness; and attested by other signs in their delivery, signs of miracle or prophecy, or both, as authoritative credentials. Confined to very brief remarks we have to deal here, and that only for a moment, with the latter of these—Prophecy.

Prophecy is authoritative instruction. It requires and evinces in the one who exercises the function a state of the human faculties wholly subject to the promptings and guidance of a higher Power. To this state the will is fully gained; its consent is cordial and earnest; the conscience also is active and critical. When God calls one thus, he inspires just the mood that is suited to the duty to be performed; gives

sagacity, comprehensiveness, and foresight, and confers the confidence of peremptory enforcement—and these to a superhuman degree.

Inspiration in prophecy apparently ran in degrees. One prophet seemed quickened to a higher grade of prophetic faculty than another. If not so, then the differences we find among prophets in the Bible are due to difference in natural faculty, idiosyncrasy, moral and emotional tendency, etc., in each, with only an equal amount of divine inspiration upon each and all.

Scarcely do the original terms designating the Hebrew prophet sustain the latter view. They are *Nābhi*, *Roēh*, and *Chozēh*. The first denotes rather the manner in which some of the prophets were exercised, namely, an ecstatic manner, from a verb meaning to bubble up, as from a gushing fountain. This was a differentiating name; and it became a name for prophet, also, in the general sense, because the exercise it denotes, together with all symbolic actions, was a common one in the schools of the prophets, where Saul himself caught the infection when inquiring for his lost asses. Hence the phrase, "Saul among the prophets." However, not all who ultimately were called *Nabhiim* were exercised by ecstasy in the delivery of their messages. The other terms, *Roēh* and *Chozēh*, marked as well their modes of prophesying.

Roēh means a Seer; one who is moved in action and words by exalted sagacity, foresight, and comprehensiveness. Samuel was a prophet in this sense. He used his natural faculties in things secular, political, religious; but he was aided by special insight, supernaturally inspired. *Chozēh* also means a Seer; a seer into the unseen depths; into events unrevealed to others; into new truths and new applications of truth; into larger areas connected with the divine mediatorial providence of God. This seeing was by visions; often in dreams; sometimes, by "face to face" communications with heavenly visitants; not unfrequently, by deepest spiritual insight without the aid of visions abnormal. Doubtless not a few of the old life-long representative prophets were one time or another divinely wrought upon in all the methods above named.

The patriarchs and early worshippers of Jehovah, being aided by visions and dreams, were on some occasions favoured with imparted foresight, and thus were added sporadic revelations to the early meager stock of divinely-revealed truths. They thus took grade as prophets, perhaps somewhat higher than that of Samuel. But Moses arose to a rank undoubtedly the highest of the Old Testament prophets. Samuel ranked with him chiefly in life-long devotement to his work, and in supplementing the law of Moses with an organized prophetic system of intense ethical instruction. Moses, again, was the highest in that God talked with him "face to face," not in dreams and visions. This

honour he shared with Christ, of whom, in many delineations, he was the preëminent type.

In thus citing examples, the endeavour is in some sort to define prophecy by specifying the varied modes in which divine revelations came through prophecy. Samuel ministered in instruction (often predictive) and organization; Moses, in all methods and to all ends, instruction, organization, and prediction. The common notion has been, that prediction was the ordinary work of the prophet. On the contrary, though a high gift—perhaps the highest—prediction was exercised sparingly, and only as important crises called for it. Just when and only as God saw it needful did he impart this power. The conscientious prophet—like the great Master in the matter of miracles—was never vain of his gift of foretelling future events. He pretended nothing of it as from himself. If bestowed occasionally, he never used it to indulge idle curiosity. His chief aim was to instruct the people in religion and ethics as taught by Moses; to relieve God's true worshippers of their difficulties, doubts, discouragements; to raise within them firmer hopes and trust in Jehovah; to rebuke fearlessly kings and their sycophants when inclined to stray from Jehovah's policy with Israel, as laid down by Moses. The predicting prophets were preëminently Elijah, Elisha, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Micah, and Malachi; the predictions of such prophets were startling and monumental, exhibiting to this day the great evidential value of prophecy.

Not to deal, however, with specific single instances of predictive prophecy, it may be said in truth that its conspicuous value as evidence is to be found throughout organic revelation, whose chief characteristic is that of prediction. From the fatal act of the first Adam in Genesis, bringing deathly injury to the race, unto the last glance in the Apocalypse, closing the scene of the healing of the nations, is to be seen prophecy in its vastest scale and scope, the evidence of which, when reasonably pondered, must overthrow every cavil possible to be raised by the stoutest skepticism. Conspicuously for all intelligences interested must this grand body of prophecy be a study to continue unto the ages of the ages.

The modes observed in instructing and predicting were not greatly varied. Usually the mode was that of plain, didactic, ofttimes impassioned, discourse, given in person by the prophet among the people in temple-courts, or within the royal palace itself, when the reform called for was not heeded. Sometimes prophecy was delivered in symbolic acts—a mode having intended concealed meaning—doubtless, when it was less expedient or safe, perhaps, to be more explicit; a mode in effect much like Christ's teaching by parables.

The arrangement is ancient by which the prophecies here in question

were classed into major and minor prophets; Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel constituting the one class, the remaining twelve the other. In the first list Isaiah has the chief prominence, because the older of the four, and because he occupies the foremost place, whether we estimate the extent or the subject-matter of his writings. There is in his discourses a surpassing loftiness, as well as depth in his spirit as it peered into the present and the future, and explained the whole in the light of divine truth. His subjects were the sovereign rule of the Holy One of Israel; the downfall of every thing selfishly high and great on earth; the calling to the law and to the testimony of sinners living in security; encouragement to lowly and depressed ones, by displaying the unending glory and fullness of Jehovah's salvation, as it was to arise on the remnant of Israel—God's true Israel—embracing Jew and Gentile; and it was for the great richness and minuteness of Messianic prophecy abounding in his writings that he has been called the Evangelist of the Old Testament.

Of the person of Isaiah, and of the circumstances of his life, incidental intimations occur in the early part and in the course of the commentary following. Very little of his personal history has come down to us. He was the son of Amoz; but who the latter was is not known. Isaiah lived in Jerusalem, was married, had at least two sons, (chaps. vii, 3, viii, 3, 18,) and prophesied under the kings Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. (See note on chap. i, 1.) His prophecies continued to be delivered probably into the last years of Hezekiah. (See notes on chapter xl.) It is barely possible Isaiah reached the first years of Manasseh, and under that wicked king shared the cruel martyrdom of being sawn asunder, which tradition assigns to him; but in such case his prophetic career was of unexampled length.

Our prophet lived midway between Moses and Christ. This gave his mission as prophet a high significance; the more so, as Drechsler says, "that it was the earliest preliminary and typical realization of the threatenings which the Lord had expressed by Moses against Israel in the event of their unfaithfulness." The points of the crises can here be only just touched. One was the result to the theocracy when ungodly Ahaz came near to upsetting the national faith of Judah in compromises with idolatrous Syria and with rebellious Israel. The disaster was foiled. The other was, when Sennacherib invaded Judah, and pious Hezekiah's faith in Jehovah issued in the annihilation of the Assyrian host. Experiences like these were the key to the courage and fidelity of the prophet and of Hezekiah, whose counsellor he was during the best part of his career.

The structure of the book of Isaiah seems to have its best solution in its apparent chronological arrangement. Five notes of time occur:

namely, the last year of Uzziah, chap. vi, 1; the expedition of Rezin, early in the reign of Ahaz, chap. vii, 1; the year of the death of Ahaz, chap. xiv, 28; the expedition of Tartan, chap. xx, 1; and the fourteenth year of Hezekiah, chap. xxxvi, 1. Difficulties exist, however, but not inextricable. For example, the first chapter seems to speak of present ravages of the country by strangers. But this chapter was probably not the first written, but is of after composition, as an introduction to the whole body of visions, expressing the average of the whole prophetic scene. Chapter vi reads like the prophet's first commission. But see comments, *in loco*. It looks backward and forward, as of a series of visions all in course of fulfilment. Difficulties similar may be sought out, if one pleases; but possibly all may be quite as easily explained.

During the lifetime of Isaiah the Assyrian power rose to its height, scourged the nations, made Israel captive, afflicted Judah, defiantly dashed itself against the rock of divine promise—against Zion and the house of David—then lost its grip and went to decay, its place being taken for the time by the Chaldean power. Through the gathering thunder-cloud the prophet lived, saw its early bursts over his country, announced the fall of the destroyer, survived till just before or after Hezekiah's peaceful close, and filled up his own last quiet years with the glorious post-Assyrian predictions of chapters xl–lxvi.

In the course of these chapters the idea of Messiah is merged in the conception of Israel, because he concentrates in himself the very being of Israel; then he is called the servant of Jehovah because he is to ascend through death and the grave to glory. See chaps. liii and xlix, 3, "Thou art my servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified."

Our prophet was filled with the certainty that the omnipotence of the Holy One of Israel was to execute destruction first on Judah at the hands of a heathenish world-power, and then on that world-power itself. Under the hard oppression of Babylon he saw humbled Israel emerging into a liberty and glory like to that its own Messiah was to institute—a kingdom of peace and salvation which was to cover the whole earth. In detailed vision he saw the dawn of the world's long looked-for salvation in the downfall of Babylon, and in Israel's deliverance by Cyrus, the anointed of Jehovah. Truth and knowledge appeared in the scene an overmatch for the inanities of idolatry. Jehovah's SERVANT—led out at first as a lamb for the slaughter—gained at length world-wide adequacy to blot out the sins of the people, and to gather and lead them from every quarter of the globe up to Zion—to Zion embosomed in a new heavens and a new earth, and filled with the divine glory.

These chapters are denied by not a few to be Isaiah's, and are handed

over to an unknown person as author in the age of the exile, mostly on the ground that supernatural prophecy is impossible. The burden of proof lies with the assumption; and, except for its apparent honesty and fallacious persistence, it were not worth the while to give it the least attention. This persistence is doubtless due to the prevalence of the anti-supernatural notion in this positivistic age; a notion already showing waning force, and not unlikely to diminish more and more. The denial is partly based also on critical grounds. These generally are to be respected, as they have been by the ablest and most candid critics in rejoinder; yet some are found to be frivolous, and all are more or less afterthoughts, or levied to the support of the main assumption—anti-supernaturalism.

Not a few of these objections have been noticed in the comments, and in introductory remarks prefacing the fortieth chapter. More attention to them could scarcely have been given, considering requirements upon the work to be brief in extent and popular in presentation. Regret is hereby acknowledged, that on this most intricate book of the Scriptures more space could not well be allotted to difficulties needing thoroughly-sifting inquiry. Not display of learning, but the obtaining of the most important results in briefest expression of exegesis upon Isaiah, has been the aim of the comments. To obtain these, the author has been in consultation throughout with the works of the most eminent scholars in this field, such as the following: Gesenius, Alexander, Drechsler, Delitzsch, Lowth, Barnes, Ewald, Stier, Hitzig, Cheyne, Cowles, Kay, Birks, Noyes, Fürst, Davies, Hengstenberg, and many subsidiary monographs and standard side-authorities.

STRUCTURE OF ISAIAH.*

First Half of the Collection of Visions, chaps. i-xxxix.

PART FIRST.

First Cycle. Chapters i-v.

OPENING WORDS OF THE COLLECTION.....	Chapter i
COURSE OF ISRAEL FROM FALSE GLORY TO THE TRUE.....	ii-iv
DEVASTATING JUDGMENT ON JEHOVAH'S VINEYARD—CLOSING WORDS OF FIRST CYCLE.....	v

Temple Vision—Isaiah's Commission as Prophet. Chapter vi.

THE PROPHET'S ACCOUNT OF THEOPHANY.....	vi, 1-12*
THE PROMISE TO THE REMNANT.....	vi, 13

PART SECOND.

Consolation of Immanuel amid Syrian Oppression. Chapters vii-xii.

DIVINE SIGN, NAMELY: A VIRGIN'S WONDROUS SON.....	vii
TWO OMENS OF THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE.....	viii, 1-4

Esoteric Addresses. Chapters viii, 5-xii.

IMMANUEL'S CONSOLATION AMID THREATENING DARKNESS	viii, 5-ix, 6
JEHOVAH'S OUTSTRETCHED HAND.....	ix, 7-x, 4
IMPERIAL WORLD-KINGDOM TO BE DESTROYED, AND JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM REARED IN ITS STEAD IN HIS ANOINTED	x, 5-xii
Judgment of the Assyrian Scourge.....	x, 5-34
The Promise of the Son of David.....	xi, xii

PART THIRD.

Collection of Oracles Concerning the Nation. Chapters xiii-xxiii.

ORACLE RESPECTING THE CHALDEAN NATION, THE HEIRS OF THE ASSYRIANS.....	xiii, 1-xiv, 27
ORACLE CONCERNING PHILISTIA.....	xiv, 28-32

* Immense difficulty has been raised by various editors and critics on this subject in respect to points Historical and Chronological. The subject cannot be cleared of difficulty. The Analysis here given, with modifications, is from Delitzsch.

ORACLE CONCERNING MOAB.....	Chapters xv, xvi
ORACLE CONCERNING DAMASCUS AND ISRAEL.....	xvii
ETHIOPIA'S SUBMISSION TO JEHOVAH.....	xviii
ORACLE CONCERNING EGYPT.....	xix
SEQUEL OF THE ORACLE AND ITS INTERPRETATION.....	xx
BURDENS OF THE SOUTH.....	xxi-xxii, 14
Oracle Concerning Desert of the Sea, (Babylon).....	xxi, 1-10
Oracle Concerning Silence of Death, (Dumah, Edom).....	xxi, 11, 12
Oracle in the Evening, (Against Arabia).....	xxi, 13-17
Oracle Concerning Valley of Vision, (Jerusalem).....	xxii, 1-14
AGAINST SHEBNA, (APPENDIX TO TETRALOGY IN CHAPTERS xx-xxii, 14).....	xxii, 15-25
ORACLE CONCERNING TYRE.....	xxiii

PART FOURTH.

Finale of the Great Catastrophe. Chapters xxiv-xxvii.

(*Eschatological.*)

THE JUDGMENT UPON THE EARTH.....	xxiv
THE FOURFOLD MELODIOUS ECHO.....	xxv-xxvii, 6
First Echo: Salvation of the Nations after Fall of the Imperial City....	xxv, 1-8
Second Echo: Humiliation of Moab.....	xxv, 9-12
Third Echo: Israel Brought Back, or Raised from the Dead.....	xxvi
Fourth Echo: Fruit-Bearing Vineyard Protected by Jehovah.....	xxvii, 1-6
JEHOVAH'S CHASTISING COURSE TOWARD ISRAEL.....	xxvii, 7-13

PART FIFTH.

Book of Woes; or, Discourses Historical, Relating to Assyrian and Egyptian Alliances. Chapters xxviii-xxxiii.

FIRST WOE: JUDGMENT ON SAMARIA AND JERUSALEM, AND CONSOLA- TION FOR BOTH.....	xxviii
SECOND WOE: OPPRESSION AND DELIVERANCE OF ARIEL, (HEARTH OF GOD).....	xxix
THIRD WOE: MOMENTOUS RESULT OF ALLIANCE WITH EGYPT.....	xxx
FOURTH WOE: FALSE HELP; THE DESPISED ONE PITIED; THE NEW ERA.....	xxxi-xxxii, 1-8
APPENDIX TO FOURTH WOE: AGAINST THE WOMEN OF JERUSALEM. xxxii, 9-20	
THE FIFTH WOE: WOE UPON ASSYRIA; DELIVERANCE AND GLORY OF JERUSALEM.....	xxxiii

PART SIXTH.

Finale of Judgment on all the World, especially on Edom, and Redemption of Jehovah's People, or Times of Restitution. Chapters xxxiv, xxxv.

PART SEVENTH.

Fulfilments of Prophecy, and Prophecies Belonging to Fourteenth Year of Hezekiah's Reign and the Times Immediately Following. Chapters xxxvi-xxxix.

(Close of the Earlier Visions. The Historical Episode.)

THE ASSYRIAN DEFIANCE	xxxvi
ATTEMPT TO COMPEL JERUSALEM'S SURRENDER.....	xxxvi-xxxvii, 1-7
THE ASSYRIAN OVERTHROW.....	xxxvii, 8-38
HEZEKIAH'S SICKNESS; ISAIAH'S ASSURANCE OF RECOVERY	xxxviii
BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY THREATENED THROUGH OCCASION OF HEZEKIAH'S IMPOLITIC COURSE.....	xxxix
Close of the Historical Episode, and Text Furnished for the Later Great Series of Prophecies.....	xxxix

Later Series of Prophecies; or, The Second Half of the Collection, chaps. xl-lxvi.

PART FIRST.

FIRST PROPHECY: CONSOLATORY ADDRESS, AND THE GOD OF CONSOLATION.....	xl
SECOND PROPHECY: THE GOD OF THE WORLD'S HISTORY AND OF PROPHECY.....	xli
THIRD PROPHECY: MEDIATOR OF ISRAEL, AND SAVIOUR OF THE GENTILES.....	xlii, 1-xliii, 13
FOURTH PROPHECY: AVENGING AND DELIVERANCE; OUTPOURING OF THE SPIRIT.....	xliii, 14-xliv, 5
FIFTH PROPHECY: HEATHEN IDOLS RIDICULED; AND JEHOVAH, GOD OF ISRAEL, MAKES REJOICING FOR HIS PEOPLE.....	xliv, 6-23
SIXTH PROPHECY: CYRUS, THE ANOINTED OF JEHOVAH, AND DELIVERER OF ISRAEL.....	xliv, 24-xlv
SEVENTH PROPHECY: FALL OF THE GODS OF BABYLON.....	xlvi
EIGHTH PROPHECY: BABYLON'S FALL; CAPITAL OF THE WORLD'S EMPIRE DESTROYED.....	xlvii
NINTH PROPHECY: DELIVERANCE FROM BABYLON	xlviii

PART SECOND.

FIRST PROPHECY: SERVANT OF JEHOVAH SELF-ATTESTED; DESPONDENCY OF ZION REPROVED.....	xlix
---	------

SECOND PROPHECY: ISRAEL'S SELF-REJECTION; SERVANT OF JEHOVAH'S STEADFASTNESS.....	Chapter: 1
THIRD PROPHECY: SALVATION BURSTS FORTH; THE CUP OF WRATH TURNS AWAY.....	li
FOURTH PROPHECY: JERUSALEM CHANGES SERVITUDE FOR DOMINION, IMPRISONMENT FOR LIBERTY.....	lii, 1-12
FIFTH PROPHECY: SERVANT OF JEHOVAH'S EXALTATION OUT OF DEEPEST DEGRADATION.....	lii, 13-liii
SIXTH PROPHECY: GLORY OF JERUSALEM; CHURCH OF THE SERVANT OF JEHOVAH.....	liv
SEVENTH PROPHECY: EXHORTATION TO COME AND TAKE THE SURE SALVATION OF JEHOVAH.....	lv
EIGHTH PROPHECY: SABBATIC ADMONITIONS; CONSOLATIONS FOR PROSELYTES AND EUNUCHS..	lvi, 1-8
NINTH PROPHECY: LEADERS OF ISRAEL WARNED FOR NEGLECT OF DUTY AND ERRORS OF THE PEOPLE.....	lvi, 9-lvii

PART THIRD.

FIRST PROPHECY: FALSE WORSHIP AND TRUE, WITH PROMISES FOR THE LATTER.....	lviii
SECOND PROPHECY: EXISTING WALL OF PARTITION BROKEN DOWN AT LAST.....	lix
THIRD PROPHECY: GLORY OF THE JERUSALEM OF THE LAST DAYS.....	lx
FOURTH PROPHECY: GLORY OF THE OFFICE COMMITTED TO SERVANT OF JEHOVAH.....	lxi
FIFTH PROPHECY: GRADUAL EXTENSION OF JERUSALEM'S GLORY.....	lxii
SIXTH PROPHECY: JUDGMENT UPON EDM AND ON THE WHOLE WORLD THAT IS HOSTILE TO THE CHURCH.....	lxiii, 1-6

Three Closing Prophecies.

FIRST CLOSING PROPHECY: THANKSGIVING, CONFESSION, AND SUPPLICATION FOR THE CHURCH OF THE CAPTIVITY.....	lxiii, 7-lxiv
SECOND CLOSING PROPHECY: JEHOVAH'S ANSWER TO THE CHURCH'S PRAYER.....	lxv
THIRD CLOSING PROPHECY: EXCLUSION OF SCORNERS FROM THE COMMING SALVATION.....	lxvi

THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET ISAIAH.

THE *vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning

Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah,

a Num.

12. 6.

PART FIRST. FIRST COLLECTION. CHAPTERS I-XXXIX.

Prophecies relating to the progress of the mass of the people toward hardening of heart, chapters i-vi.

CHAPTER I.

PREFATORY.

1. The vision—This is a programme word—a title applying to this entire book of prophecies, spoken or written during the reigns herein mentioned. The word denotes a supernatural perception, inspiration, revelation, prophecy; here taken collectively for a body of prophecies. **Isaiah the son of Amoz**—Of Isaiah's origin nothing is certainly known beyond what is stated in this verse. Nothing whatever is known of his father, Amoz, though many of the Church Fathers supposed him to be the prophet Amos, an error caused, possibly, by the Greek word in the Septuagint being "Amos" for both Amoz and Amos. So noble a character had little need to be known other than as simple "Isaiah." To this prophet has always been assigned the preëminence among the so-called prophets of the Old Testament scriptures. Till the time of Semler (1725-1791) his sole authorship of this book was little called in question. The portion then questioned is the last twenty-seven chapters. Eichhorn and others vigorously continued the dispute, resting their objections on internal reasons purely, such as philological peculiarities, archaisms, and words used once only, and that in the ques-

tioned chapters. Gesenius, Ewald, and some lesser lights, have pressed this evidence also against the genuineness of other chapters; for an example, chaps. xiii, 1-xiv, 23; also, chap. xxi, 6-10. The ground of opposition is largely the supernatural element in prophecy. It is claimed that what is herein predictive can be accounted for by mere statesmanlike prevision; that, at least, the last twenty-seven chapters are a later production, written at or after the Babylonian captivity. Other pieces of this collection, beside those named, on one or another ground of criticism are denied to Isaiah as the author. Against all this, Drechler, Delitzsch, Hengstenberg, Alexander, Prof. Harman, and others, protest staunchly; and with candour, great learning, and acute criticism, utterly overthrow the opposition. Keil, in his *Introduction to the Old Testament*, (Eng. trans. in *Clark's Theol. Library*,) and Kay, in his *Introduction to Isaiah*, (*Speaker's Commentary*,) give excellent aid to one in search of the facts on this subject: the one discusses generally, but thoroughly, in the interest of unity of authorship in Isaiah; and the other is a valiant demolisher of philological difficulties raised against this unity of authorship. **Concerning Judah and Jerusalem**—These prophecies all had a bearing, direct or remote, on the people of Judah. Though several were uttered with reference to immediately outlying peoples and to foreign nations, they also had alternate reference to the Jews.

The question as to what time this

kings of Judah. **2** ^b Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the LORD hath spoken; ^c I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. ■ ^d The ox knoweth his

^b Deut. 32. 1; Jer. 2. 12; 6. 19; 22. 29; Ezek. 36. 4; Micah 1. 2; 6. 1, 2. — ^c Chap. 5. 1, 2.

chapter relates, is difficult to settle. Is it the first prophecy written by Isaiah? Or is it rather a comprehensive introduction, covering by anticipation the average character of the people and age for the entire term of the prophet's career? The latter is more likely to be the true view, because the more reasonable one.

Throughout the chapter the prophet's central thought is God's covenant with Israel as a nation, as seen in Lev. xxvi, in Deut. xxviii—xxxii, and in Solomon's prayer, 1 Kings ix, 9.

2. Hear, O heavens... give ear, O earth—Here begins a solemn reprehensory appeal against Judah and Jerusalem, filled with digressive yet relevant points, and ending with the fifth chapter. It is in the style of Deut. xxxii, 1, for earth and heaven are unchanging witnesses from the time of Moses to that of Isaiah of the clearness with which God, by his prophets, sets forth his requirements, and their rejection by the people. They are summoned to listen again, for a crisis is reached, and Jehovah speaks. **The Lord**—Hebrew, יְהוָה,

Yehovah, a name which the Jews never uttered, but used אֲדֹנָי, *Adonai*, instead, which means *Master, Lord*. The other chief name of deity, אֱלֹהִים, *Elohim*, designates in the Old Testament a being of power; while Jehovah is the word which expresses what Deity is in himself. More need not here be said of this name, other than that it was the national name of Israel's God, yet so awfully sacred that it was pronounced only by the substitute name—*Adonai*.

Hath spoken—The preterit is here used for the present—he speaks, though this is not the first time. Heb. i, 1. He has repeatedly spoken, and still speaks. **Nourished and brought up**

owner, and the ass his master's crib: *but* Israel ^e doth not know, my people ^f doth not consider. **4** Ah sinful nation, a people ^g laden with iniquity, ^h a seed of evildoers, children that are cor-

^d Jer. 8. 7. — ^e Jer. 9. 3, 6. — ^f Chap. 5. 12. — ^g 1 Heb. of *heaviness*. — ^h Ch. 57. 3, 4; Matt. 3. 7.

children—From his infancy as a nation God reared Israel. This strain is followed by other prophets. See Hosea xi, 1; Jer. ii, 2, 3. "The Lord" made Israel great, and set him on high. Ezek. xxxi, 4. Still he rebelled. Such conduct of a covenant people was the greatest of wonders, and heaven and earth are called to attest this fact.

3. Rebelling thus they virtually declared God's proprietorship in them at an end. So they stand in poor contrast with the stupidest animals. Jer. viii, 7. **The ox... the ass**—Dr. Thomson, (*The Land and the Book*, vol. ii, p. 97,) describing a scene at the close of a day in Tiberias, says: "No sooner had we got within the walls, than the drove began to disperse. Every ox knew perfectly well his owner, his house, and the way to it, nor did he become bewildered for a moment in the mazes of narrow and crooked alleys. As for the asses, they walked straight to the door, and up to the master's crib. I followed one company clear into the habitation, and saw each take his appropriate manger, and begin his evening meal." **Israel**—The whole nation, Judah as well as Israel. As a covenant people, both were included in a designed unity. **Not know**—Do not recognise God as their rightful owner. **Not consider**—The parallelism here is explanatory. My people have lost knowledge of me, and do not attend to the spiritual food which, as their Lord, I fain would give them: just as the master of the "ox" and the "ass" is known, and these stupid animals are fed by him. A comparison the more striking for its homeliness.

4. Ah—The exclamation denotes mental pain, and answers to our word *alas!* The adjective of the text is an active participle in the Hebrew. **Seed of evildoers**—Offspring of wicked

rupters: they have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are ²gone away backward.

5 ^a Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will ³revolt more and more: the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. ■ From the sole of the foot even unto the head *there is no sound-*

2 Heb. *alienated*, or, *separated*, Psal. 58, 3.—*h* Chap. 9, 13; Jer. 2, 30; 5, 3.—3 Heb. *increase revolt*.

immediate ancestors. **Children... corrupters**—From a word of a reflexive form, hence *corrupting themselves*. Deut. iv, 16, 25. The word denotes violence, moral self-violence, and is used of the antediluvians who “corrupted” their way, so as to compel God to destroy them. Gen. vi, 12, 13. All the phrases here express intense feeling. **Holy One of Israel**—This phrase is used by Isaiah more than by any other prophet. It is used in all parts of this collection of the prophecies, and is a proof of one authorship of the whole. It means Him “whose name is holy,” (chap. lvii, 15,) essentially holy; who deigned to choose Israel, and dwell with him: but he forsook God, and turned his back, not his face, to him. Such is the thought stated in the words, **they are gone away backward**.

5, 6. **Why should... more**—It is doubtful whether the question in Hebrew is, “For what reason should ye,” or, “Upon what part will ye,” be **stricken any more?** The latter is philologically less harsh, and it falls in better with the sense of the connecting words. The sense then is, Why permit yourselves to be smitten more? your whole person is already bruised in every part, as the proper punishment of your voluntary evil doings. As to the word which means *to smite*, see it illustrated in Deut. xxviii, 21, 27, 35.

The whole head... the whole heart—In this figure the nation is meant, and in the figure continued in the words **from the sole of the foot even unto the head**, the desperate moral state of all Judah—subjects and rulers, priests and prophet—is indicated. All are involved, not only in this condition,

ness in it; *but* wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores: ¹they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ⁴ointment. 7 ^k Your country *is* desolate, your cities *are* burned with fire: your land, strangers devour it in your presence, and *it is* desolate, ⁵as overthrown by strangers. 8 And the daughter of Zion is left ¹as a cottage in

i Jer. 8, 22.—4 Or, *oil*.—*k* Deut. 28, 51, 52.—5 Heb. *as the overthrow of strangers*.—*l* Job 27, 18; Lam. 2, 6.

but in punishment for it. Not a spot in Church or body politic is left unsmitten. Chap. ix, 13–16. The intent here is not so much total depravity, (for which this passage is often quoted,) as the retributive consequences of departure from God. **Wounds**—Contusions, effects of blows where skin is not broken. **Putrefying sores**—Either recent or old, which admit not of healing. **Closed... bound... mollified**—This language refers to the surgical treatment in that age. Medical applications were external, (Luke x, 34, James v, 14,) chiefly oil (*ointment* in the text) and hand pressure, and binding with cloth—no sewing up of wounds. The moral is, that priests and false prophets did not turn the people to God, who alone could heal their maladies and pardon sin, but adopted a worldly policy in their training of the nation.

7. The figurative language is now dropped, and words direct and literal are used. **Country... desolate... cities... burned with fire**, etc.—Notice how nearly every word corresponds to the curses threatened in Lev. xxvi and Deut. xxviii. From the time of Isaiah downward the state of Israel was a realization of the curses of the law. **Strangers**—This word occurs twice in this verse: possibly the fact hints at the oppression the people were to experience from foreign conquerors, as a just return for their propensity to stray after strange gods rather than to adhere to their covenant God and Protector. See Deut. xxviii, 48, 50, 51.

8. **The daughter of Zion**—Zion was the strong hill of Jerusalem, made sacred in David's devout thoughts of

a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers,^m as a besieged city. 9 "Except the LORD of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as °Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah.

10 Hear the word of the LORD, ye

^m Jer. 4. 17.—ⁿ Lam. 3. 22; Romans 9. 29.
^o Genesis 19. 24.—^p Deut. 32. 32; Ezekiel 16. 46.

Jehovah's presence in the tabernacle erected there. It was the seat of regal dominion and of sacred worship during David's life—the "chosen habitation" of Jehovah. Psalms ii, 6; cxxxii, 13. By a rhetorical figure all Jerusalem was called Zion, as the seat of religion and of the Church. Chap. x, 24. The Church was called "Daughter of Zion," denoting virgin innocence, and youthful promise of vigour and fruitfulness. There would be a faithful few in Jerusalem, even when ravages of war would be upon her. These Isaiah sees are to be left as a desolated, tumble-down lodge after the harvest of the country gardens. The cottage or lodge here spoken of is a rude temporary shelter erected in the open grounds, where vines, cucumbers, gourds, etc., are growing, and in which "lodge" some lonely man or boy is set to watch, either to guard the plants from robbers or to scare away foxes



LODGE IN A GARDEN OF CUCUMBERS.

and jackals from the vines. Cucumbers—Not such as pass by that name with us, but a species of melon, Cu-

rulers^p of Sodom; give ear unto the law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah. 11 To what purpose is the multitude of your^q sacrifices unto me? saith the LORD: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs,

^q 1 Sam. 15. 22; Psalm 50. 8, 9; 51. 16; Prov. 15. 8; 21. 27; chap. 66. 3; Jer. 6. 20; 7. 21; Amos 5. 21, 22; Micah 6. 7.

cumis chate, or *C. sativis*, said by Hasselquist to be used, the first by grandees, the second by common people.

9. **Lord of hosts**—Of the angelic hosts, and starry heavens. Worship of the latter was very early observed by the Assyrians, Phœnicians, Canaanites, etc., but the Lord of Israel is above all, and so is called "Lord" or Master "of hosts." **Very small remnant**—That which is left of the people after the ravages of invasive war. With Isaiah, as often elsewhere, the word "remnant" means the righteous, in distinction from the multitude of the ungodly. Romans ix, 29. **We**—After having reproved the sinful nation, the prophet now identifies himself with the people. **As Sodom**—Not in character, probably, but in destiny; that is, cut off entirely. **Gomorrah**—The same idea, repeated for preserving poetic parallelism. The prophets—eminently Isaiah—frequently gave their instructions in symbolic terms, and in sentences metrical as well as poetical.

10, 11. The appeal, continued from verses 10 to 20, rather supposes the prophet to observe that the people are conscious of their delinquencies, and that to make up for them they make an extravagant show of ceremonial devotion. Hence this abrupt chiding. **Ye rulers of Sodom . . . Gomorrah**—The prophet had already said, that but for God's mercy the nation would have been in *condition* like to those vile cities—utterly destroyed; now he says, they are positively like to them in *character*. **To what purpose**—Denoting unacceptableness and valuelessness, because of the insincerity of the offerers. **I am full**—Have had enough of them. **Burnt offerings of rams**—Rams, bullocks, lambs, goats, were offered on festivals of new moon, pass-

or of ^ahe goats. **12** When ye come ⁷to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts? **13** Bring no more ^avain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, ^athe calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; *it is ^ainiquity*, even the solemn meeting. **14** Your ^anew moons and your ^aappointed feasts my soul hateth:

6 Heb. *great he goats*.—7 Heb. *to be seen*.—^aExodus 23, 17; 34, 23.—^sMatt. 15, 9.—^tJoel 1, 14; 2, 15.—8 Or. *grief*.—^uNumbers 28, 11.—^vLev. 23, 2; Lam. 2, 6.—^wChapter 43, 24.—^xJob 27, 9; Psa. 134, 2; Prov. 1, 28; chap. 59, 2; Jer. 14, 12; Micah 3, 4.

over, feast of weeks, feast of trumpets, day of atonement, and feast of tabernacles, the first three as "burnt offerings," (Num. xxviii, 13, 24,) the last as ^asin offering. Numbers xxviii, 15, 22. Moses instituted Jehovah-worship on the new moon to extinguish heathen superstitions on that occasion among his people. The feast of the new moon was the moon of Tisri, our October, the opening of the civil year, announced by the blowing of silver trumpets and other ceremonies.

12. Who hath required this—That is, to appear in this formal, heartless, undevout way. The true way of appearing before the Lord is prescribed in Exod. xxxiv, 23, 24; Deut. xvi, 16, 17.

13. Vain oblations—*The Minchah*—an offering of meal to go with the "burnt offering;" this is here termed "vain," because an undevout, empty performance. **Incense**—No longer a fragrant odour, a symbol of true devotion, but **an abomination** to God. Incense was made from burning in a censer frankincense procured from incisions in thuriferous trees, found in Arabia. Sweet spices were mixed with it, making "a sacrifice of a sweet-smelling savour." **Solemn meeting**—Heartless worldliness attending ordinary religious occasions "reaches even to the great day of atonement, the most solemn of all days in their sacred calendar."

14, 15. My soul hateth—The "soul" is the seat of emotions, affections, etc. God's hatred, or anger, however, is different from men's, in that it means an ethical intention to pun-

they are a trouble unto me; ^aI am weary to bear *them*. **15** And ^awhen ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; ^ayea, when ye ^amake many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of ^ablood.

16 ^aWash ye, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; ^bcease to do evil; **17** Learn to do well; ^cseek judgment, ^drelieve

^yPsa. 66, 18; 1 Tim. 2, 8.—9 Hebrew, *multiply prayer*.—^zChapter 59, 3.—10 Hebrew, *bloods*.—^aJer. 4, 14.—^bPsa. 34, 14; 37, 27; Amos 5, 15; Rom. 12, 9; 1 Peter 3, 11.—11 Or, *righten*.—^cJer. 22, 3, 16; Micah 6, 8; Zech. 7, 9; 8, 16.

ish. Rom. i. 18. But here the prophet speaks in God's place, and as he supposes God feels. Year after year the cycle of new moon, sabbath, and festival ran its round, with no result to the people but that of Jehovah's indignant non-acceptance. This was God's punishment. **Spread forth your hands**—The palms of your hands raised in prayer, in alarm. Jer. iv, 31. They may pray now in fear, but I am not hearing (Hebrew present participle) them, because it is in fear, not in repentance. Their hands are still **full of blood**.

16. Wash you—The allusion here is doubtless to the injunction on priests, who, on pain of death, (Exodus xxx, 19–21,) had to wash hands and feet before they ministered at the altar. The symbol, no doubt, was at once understood by these worldly men now before the prophet: the expression did not seem to them an abrupt transition to another subject. Before they could offer "the earnest, effectual prayer of the righteous man," they must pray not in alarm merely, but with deep repentance. They must **cease to do evil**.

17. Seek judgment—Better, the concrete word, *justice*. As rulers and magistrates they had sought bribes rather than to do justice. **Relieve the oppressed**—The verb means *set right*, or, *make straight*; the condition of him who has been unjustly dealt with. The same duty is enjoined in behalf of **the fatherless**, inexperienced orphans, and the helpless **widow**. Both of these were an easy prey to their rapaciousness. For both of these

the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. **18** Come now, and ^dlet us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, ^ethey shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. **19** If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land: **20** But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: ^ffor the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it.

^d Chap. 43. 26; Micah 6. 2.—^e Psalm 51. 7; Rev. 7. 14.—^f Num. 23. 19; Titus 1. 2.—^g Jer. 2. 20, 21.—^h Jer. 6. 28, 30; Ezekiel 22. 18, 19.

classes, oftener than for any others, does the Bible set up the plea for vindication and protection. Psalm x, 18; lxxii, 4; Exodus xxii, 22-24; Deut. x, 18; James i, 27.

18-20. Revolting as the people's acts have been, God is here pleading to show that their ill condition is of their own causing. **Come now**—This is a common formula of entreaty. **Let us reason**—Discuss the case together. The verb is reciprocal; hence, considering the parties, to secure their consent to examine the issue is to secure their own self-conviction. **Though your sins be as scarlet**—As deep dyed as scarlet. This expresses a superlative degree of moral turpitude. "Scarlet," or crimson, is made from a dye formed of insects found in excrescences on the oak, like our common cochineal. It is the firmest of dyes, and is the deepest symbol of blood-guiltiness. Yet *such* sins shall be washed out, and the souls of the people become cleansed to whiteness, if they will even now become obedient; but fearfully otherwise if they still rebel. On condition of obedience, land and city shall be preserved; on continued disobedience, the ruthless invader shall bring destruction, as sure as God liveth.

AN EXCLAMATION AGAINST THE CITY, 21-31.

21-23. By a Hebrew character called *Pishah*, after verse 20 a long pause is indicated. Though invited to repent, the people, it seems, make no promise, not even a response, and the prophet's tone now becomes elegiac. **How is the faithful city**—The once faithful.

21 ^aHow is the faithful city become a harlot! it was full of judgment; righteousness lodged in it; but now murderers. **22** ^bThy silver is become dross, thy wine mixed with water: **23** ^cThy princes are rebellious, and ^dcompanions of thieves: ^eevery one loveth gifts, and followeth after rewards: they ^fjudge not the fatherless, neither doth the cause of the widow come unto them. **24** Therefore saith the Lord, the LORD

^a Hos. 9. 15.—^b Prov. 29. 24.—^c Jer. 22. 17; Ezek. 22. 15; Hosea 4. 18; Micah 3. 11; 7. 3.—^d Jer. 5. 28; Zech. 7. 10.

Lam. i, 1. Reading it thus, the rhythm is better seen: "How is she become a harlot—the faithful citadel. She that was full of judgment, wherein righteousness did lodge, and now murderers." The "city," or citadel, is Zion. Verse 27. (Just this was the case with Jerusalem when destroyed by the Chaldeans, and afterward by the Romans.) **Thy silver is...dross, thy wine mixed with water**—These are symbols of great moral deterioration. So far, figures; but in the next verse, plain, bluntly-literal predicates occur. **Princes...rebellious**—Are utterly corrupt and lawless. **Companions of thieves**—In public responsibilities they are confederate with plunderers. No justice done without bribery; no hearing given to the **fatherless** and **widow**, because the latter are too poor, to give bribes.

24. But there is a Judge who sees all this, and who will recompense according to what he sees. **The Lord of hosts**—He commands from heaven to smite and to protect: in the one case as it deserves; in the other, as it needs. The term "The Lord," here, is from an unusual Hebrew word, **יְהוָה אֲדֹנָי**, *Hā Adōn*, used in Exodus xxxiii, 17; xxxiv, 23; Isa. i, 24; iii, 1; x, 16, 23; xix, 4. "It designates God as the supreme administrator and judge. They (the people) had "appeared before" him, (verse 12,) much as if they were patronizing one whom they were willing to please with a grand pageant, but one who had no real control over them; (compare Ps. xii, 5, *Adon*;) and, after trampling his courts, had gone forth to oppress their

of hosts, the Mighty One of Israel, Ah, "I will ease me of mine adversaries, and avenge me of mine enemies. **25** And I will turn my hand upon thee, and

n Deut. 23. 63; Ezek. 5. 13.—12 Heb. *according to pureness*.

fellow men. He will now prove himself to be what he was called, (KAY, *Com., in loco*,) **the Mighty One of Israel**, and this name is analogous to "Mighty God of Jacob" in Genesis xlix, 24, which passage helps us to the meaning of this. In this verse He shows who is master, and who can bring proud and rebellious Israel through sharp pangs of punishment to repentance, and give exaltation to the crushed few who were his real friends. Isaiah, and those he represents in his own times and in all ages, are his real friends. Is not this principle involved in the remaining words of this verse?

Ah—The connexion requires this word to be used here in a tone of menace, as in verse 4, it must needs be in a tone of grief. Or, it may be of grief here also, and so the meaning be, "Alas, that I must ease or comfort myself by using severity on the guilty, unfaithful ones of Israel." This softens the metaphor in this passage, and others of like import, called *anthropopathia*, that is, speaking or feeling as men speak and feel. This figure is constantly used in the Bible. It is necessarily so used. The pure essence of God's being is impossible for men to apprehend. His mode of thinking and feeling is therefore expressed in our own way of thinking and feeling. Lowth says: "This very necessity leads to beauty, as does all metaphoric language. When images are taken from the superior faculties of man, from the purer and more generous affections of human nature, and applied to God, we are apt to acquiesce in the notion—we overlook the metaphor and take it as a proper attribute; but when the idea is gross and offensive, as in this passage of Isaiah, where the impatience of anger and the pleasure of revenge are attributed to God, we are immediately shocked at the application; the impropriety strikes us at

¹² purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin: **26** And I will restore thy judges ¹³ as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning:

o Jeremiah 6. 29; 9. 7; Malachi 3. 3.—*p* Jeremiah 33. 7.

once: and the mind, casting about for something in the divine nature analogous to the image, lays hold on some great, obscure, vague idea, which it endeavours in vain to comprehend, and is lost in immensity and astonishment."

—Lowth, *Isaiah, in loco*. But no mischiefs need result from the use of this figure, if it be considered that the inspired writer is predicting only the incomprehensible ethical action of God in the case, not the manner of the action. All the imprecatory psalms, the lxixth and cixth, for example, have their explanation on this basis.

25. In this verse punishment and salvation are combined: punishment as the means, salvation as the end.

I will turn my hand upon thee—

This with a view to vigorous correction. The words seem addressed to captive Zion. Verse 27. If this chapter were written as introductory to the whole body of prophecies following, as some think, then its scope embraces the average character of Judah from Uziah's reign to the captivity and the restoration. Then, too, the changes of aspect—deep shades and partial lights—seen to pass over the chapter are to be accounted for. **And purely purge away thy dross**—The recovery was to be by severe measures, namely, as by smelting fires. The figure is, that in the people and princes of Judah there was something corresponding to silver, but mixed with abundant dross. The latter was to be thoroughly removed.

Thy tin—Alloy; tin, lead, or other base metal. The same figure as before used, precious metals held in combination by other ores.

26, 27. I will restore thy judges

—Corrupt judges and counsellors shall be removed, and such magistrates as in early times—as in David's time—were enjoyed, shall take their places. **City of righteousness**—The prophet catches a glimpse of what he is yet to de-

afterward 'thou shalt be called, The city of righteousness, the faithful city. **27** Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and ¹³her converts with righteousness.

28 And the ¹⁴destruction of the transgressors and of the sinners *shall be* together, and they that forsake the Lord shall be consumed. **29** For they shall

q Zech. 8. 3.—¹³ Or, *they that return of her*.—*r* Job 31. 3; Psa. 1. 6; 5. 6; 73. 27; 92. 9; 104. 35.—¹⁴ Heb. *breaking*.

scribe in chap. lx, 14. **Faithful city**—A city steadfast in character, also of unquestionably good reputation. Chaps. vii, 9; xxxiii, 5, 6. **Zion**—By metonymy, the purified city itself. **With judgment**—In just visitation for sin, yet with merciful intent. Although obliged to punish this rebellious people because of their perversity, God's infliction should lead to repentance, when he would remove his stroke and again gather them to their own land. **Her converts**—Margin, *They that return of her*. Possibly the reference is to the return from captivity in Babylon: more likely, the expression is general, and means those who return to the Lord.

28. Destruction . . . transgressors—Literally, there shall be a *breaking*, or entire crushing out, of *apostates*, revolters, deserters from Jehovah. **They that forsake**—An equivalent expression to *apostates*; they shall come to an end, be destroyed totally. The characters in the first of the chapter are here referred to. See Psa. xxxvii, 20, 38.

29. They . . . ye—These pronouns are thought by some interpreters to belong to the same parties. A Hebrew usage, in some instances, allows this. But a consistent sense is yielded by supposing different classes to be referred to; in which case the meaning would be, *they*, of the coming period, will shrink with shame from the **oaks**, or terebinth groves, and the **gardens**, both of which *ye*, of this generation, have used (under the one, and within the other) for idolatrous practices. The idolatrous element was ever present in pre-eminently wicked times. **Which ye have desired**—The prophet, while speaking, turns suddenly

be ashamed of "the oaks which ye have desired, 'and ye shall be confounded for the gardens that ye have chosen. **30** For ye shall be as an oak whose leaf fadeth, and as a garden that hath no water. **31** "And the strong shall be 'as tow, ¹⁵ and the maker of it as a spark, and they shall both burn together, and none shall quench *them*."

s Chapter 57. 5.—*t* Chapter 65. 3; 66. 17.—*u* Ezek. 32. 21.—*v* Chap. 43. 17.—¹⁵ Or, *and his work*.

around to the men of that time, and says, "Ye are the men I mean, who are storing up shame and confusion for the generations to come."

30. An oak whose leaf fadeth—"Notice the beautiful sarcasm. Ye have chosen oaks, and as a fading-leaved oak ye shall be; ye have chosen gardens, and ye shall be as a garden dry and parched. The objects of your idolatry are the images of your ruin."—*Whedon*.

31. And the strong—The "strong" men—"strong" rulers of the nation, of which the present rulers are the fit representatives. **As tow**—Beaten flax. A symbol of weakness. **And the maker of it**—Better, *his work*, as in the marginal reading. All that his skill has laboriously produced—whether his idols or worldly schemes. **A spark**—As the "spark" which ignites the "tow." No longer than this shall they endure—they shall go up in a flash and in smoke, and that shall be the end of them.

Such is the appropriate warning of the close of this preface to the body of prophecies following. "The hand of the Lord shall be known toward his servants, and his indignation toward his enemies." Chap. lxxi, 14.

CHAPTER II.

THE WAY OF GENERAL JUDGMENT; OR, THE COURSE OF ISRAEL FROM FALSE GLORY TO THE TRUE. Chaps. ii-iv.

A MESSIANIC OUTLOOK, 1-5.

Here commences a prophetic section, which ends, perhaps, with chapter iv, though some are of the opinion that chapter v. and others still that chapter vi, should be included. From the

CHAPTER II.

THE word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. **2** And ^ait shall come to pass ^bin the last days, ^cthat the mountain of the Lord's house shall be ^destablished in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; ^eand all nations shall flow unto it. **3** And many people shall go and say, ^f"Come ye, and

^a Micah 4. 1.—^b Gen. 49. 1; Jer. 23. 20.—^c Psa. 68. 15, 16.—^d Or, *prepared*.—^e Psalm 72. 8; chap. 27. 13.

let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: 'for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. **4** And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and ^gthey shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into ^hpruninghooks: nation

^e Jer. 31. 6; 50. 5; Zech. 8. 21, 23.—^f Luke 24. 47.—^g Psa. 46. 9; Hosea 2. 18; Zech. 9. 10.—^h Or, *scythes*.

character of its contents, the message seems properly to include only chapters ii-iv. Its date is unknown. Its early place in the collection of Isaiah's prophecies is inexplicable, if it be not of King Uzziah's time, and one of Isaiah's earliest writings.

1. **The word**—Though seen in spiritual vision, "the word," here, is spoken of as something actually existing. It was a message, a speech, to **Judah and Jerusalem**. See 1 Sam. iii, 1 and Jer. xviii, 18 as to how the terms "word" and "vision" are used in the sense of prophecy.

2-4. The section begins with a consoling message respecting a coming Messianic period. The language has some appearance of being a borrowed prophecy. Micah iv, 1-4 has the same. As to which is the original author, or whether both quoted from an older prophet, commentators differ. It is generally agreed that Isaiah delivered these words in Uzziah's time, consequently before 758 B. C. of our chronology. Micah began in the reign of Jotham, (Micah i, 1,) and Jeremiah, says Micah, (chap. xxvi, 18,) gave a certain prophecy, found in Micah iii, 12, (just one verse preceding this passage in question,) in the reign of Hezekiah. These facts sufficiently indicate that Isaiah was prior to Micah in the use of this passage.

2. **In the last days**—Literally, *in the end*, or latter part, of the days; the entering upon the Messianic period, including even its onward, indefinite continuance. Such is the sense of this prophetic formula of "the last days." **The mountain of the Lord's house**—Generally used to designate Mount Zion, though Moriah was the mount on

which the temple stood. Purified Jerusalem, as a whole, was the type of the glorious Church of Christ. **Shall be established**—That is, permanently settled. **In the top of the mountains**—So that its view shall overlook all hills, or hitherto dominating mountains, around. The image, here, is of converted Gentile nations. Zion shall be superior. **And all nations shall flow unto it**—The attractive power of the Church shall draw the nations ever upward to it. John xii, 20.

3. **Shall go and say**—With missionary zeal they shall in multitudes gather other multitudes to be taught. **Mountain of the Lord**—Zion again, where Jehovah dwells. **The house**... **Jacob**—Second phrase, more familiar than the first, and so explains the first. See Psalm xx, 1. **Of his ways**—"Of" is loosely partitive. We can know only in part, (1 Cor. xiii, 1,) yet sufficient to walk in God's "ways" and be saved. **The law**—The true religion as a rule of duty. **Word of the Lord**—The true religion as a revelation.

4. **He shall judge**—That is, He from whom "the law" of the third verse goes forth. **Among**—Rather, *between*. **The nations**—God, by his law, instructs his own people; by his providences, the Gentiles. He impresses and informs the conscience, and inclines the masses of humanity to peace. They shall follow the peaceful pursuits of agriculture rather than war. **Swords into ploughshares**—In the East, the latter resemble the short sword, and not much smithery is required for the transformation. **Pruninghooks**—The "pruninghook" is like a sickle. The metallic part of the spear

shall not lift up sword against nation,
neither shall they learn war any more.
5 O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us
walk in the light of the Lord.

¶ Therefore thou hast forsaken thy

h Psal. 72. 3, 7. — *i* Eph. 5. 8. — *3* Or, *more than the east*. — *k* Num. 23. 7. — *l* Deut. 13. 14.

needs only to be a little flattened, and bent into a sickle form, and sharpened. The imagery, here, is of calm rural life, belonging to a perfectly wholesome civilization. **Learn war any more**—The allusion is quite plain. Uzziah's reign, in which this was written, was marked by the invention of new weapons of war. 2 Chronicles xxvi, 14, 15. The prophet sees all this cease in the glorious Messianic times, when the Holy Spirit shall with effect rebuke, and lovingly reprove, Jews and Gentiles, and cause their tendencies to join and flow together toward mutual peace and general salvation.

5. And by this bright vision of outside nations pouring into Zion, the prophet attempts to move the people around him to steadfast fidelity to Jehovah. **House of Jacob**—The family of Israel, the Church, or chosen people. **Let us walk**—Hortatory appeal, with himself included in it. **Light of the Lord**—A glorious revelation, shining on the path of truth and duty. Prov. vi, 23; Ps. cxix, 105; 2 Cor. iv, 4.

Need enough there was for this exhortation to the people, because, as the next verse shows, they were walking directly into an opposite course—all this time preferring darkness to light.

A PRAYERFUL SIGH, 6-9.

6. Therefore—*נ*, not "therefore,"

but *for*, or *because*, as if a sad elipsis precedes, like this: "Well may I earnestly exhort this people." **Thou hast forsaken... the house of Jacob**—This God had before often done, yet with hope, as perhaps he now had hope, of their reform. Romans ii, 5. "The house of Jacob" is the family or nation of Israel. In later days, after the first deportations to Assyria of the Israelites, the names Israel and Judah, as now the names Israel and Jacob, were used interchangeably. **Replen-**

ished the house of Jacob, because they be replenished ³⁴ from the east, and ¹are soothsayers like the Philistines, ^m and they ⁴please themselves in the children of strangers. **7** ⁿTheir land also is full

m Ps. 106. 35; Jer. 10. 2. — *4* Or, *abound with the children*, etc. — *n* Deut. 17. 16, 17.

ished—Or, *abound in*. **From the east**—From Syria, and Chaldea, and Persia, and Arabia. To speak generally, any or all these regions may explain the phrase "from the east."

מְקַדֵּם, *milkedem*, may be rendered

"from the east," or, "more than the east," or, "from of old time." A marginal reading has the second, and the Septuagint, the Vulgate, and other Versions, have the last. This meaning is plausible. Then the thought is, They abound, as in old time, in **soothsayers**; or, have become themselves "soothsayers," like those in old time.

Like the Philistines—Foreigners in the southwestern part of Palestine, who, by contiguity and association, corrupted the people of Israel. **And they please themselves**—They clap their hands in joy of such association; or, they join or strike hands (Gesenius and Delitzsch) with these corrupting neighbours, and form compacts with them.

The question is of much interest how idolatry, under kings so hostile to it as were Uzziah and Jotham, should have had such hold on the people. Doubtless the evil was not legally tolerated, but it pandered to natural passions; and unregenerate individuals, among whom were many men in court circles, were involved in it. Prophets zealously inveighed against the evil, as do preachers of this day against intemperance and licentiousness, because both are certain death to all true religion and political morality.

7. Another effect of the intercourse with foreign peoples which the prophet inveighed against, was foreign money and foreign troops. **Their land**—The land of Judah, a rich agricultural land, under great cultivation, (for Uzziah loved husbandry, 2 Chr. xxvi, 10.) and produced abundant commerce, and a great influx of gold and silver at this

of silver and gold, neither *is there any* end of their treasures; their land is also full of horses, neither *is there any* end of their chariots: **8** ° Their land also is full of idols; they worship the work of their own hands, that which their own fingers have made: **9** And the mean

o Jer. 2. 28.—p Verses 19, 21; Rev. 6. 15.

time. **Silver and gold**—It was not for gold as such, but the love of it for forbidden luxury, that is lamented. **Horses... chariots**—The law of Moses against the multiplication of these, (Deut. xvii, 16,) was clearly to encourage peaceful agricultural habits among the people. "Chariots" and "horses," however, became very common. But how about highways for chariots? At the present time no such roads exist in Palestine—nor can they be made, except at very large expense, over parts of the main bridle-path thoroughfares: neither have they ever prevailed there under Mohammedan rule. Civilization, in the Bible ages of Palestine, *must* have been vastly in advance of the present.

8. Land... is full of idols—It is scarcely to be supposed that the idolatry mentioned here was public. The "idols" were a private possession of individuals and of families, like the teraphim in Jacob's family. Gen. xxxi, 34. The word rendered "idols" properly signifies *unrealities, nonentities*, of no avail as deities or any thing else. Such is the prophet's view of them. Psalm xli, 5. **Their own fingers have made**—This expresses still deeper contempt of them. So, also, in chapters xli-xlvii.

9. Mean man... great man—All classes, both common people and the upper ranks, were involved in this kind of idolatry—that is, in harbouring household penates and the like. **Boweth down... humbleth himself**—Most commentators believe these expressions to refer both to bowing in worship to idols, and to the punishment following. **Forgive them not**—Not necessarily a wish of the prophet, except so far as he desired the proper vindication of the rights of Jehovah. The Hebrew tense is future; hence it amounts to a predic-

tion: *Thou wilt not forgive them.* See note on i, 24.

10 ° Enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty. **11** The ^a lofty looks of man shall be humbled,

q Verse 17; chap. 5. 15, 16; 13. 11.

tion: *Thou wilt not forgive them.* See note on i, 24.

10. Enter into the rock—Natural and artificial caves are very numerous in the soft cretaceous rocks of Palestine. Into these people fled on the approach of an invading army. To the shelter afforded by these the people are now exhorted to fly, that they may, if possible, avoid the wrath coming upon them. Occasion for fright is the greater now that Jehovah is coming in judgment. **Hide thee in the dust**—In verse 19 is the mention of "caves of the earth," or "dust," gathered during ages in the cave-bottoms. This probably is what is meant here. Yet allusion may be made to the storms of dust common in the East. The blasts of Jehovah's fiery judgment may be meant, and the direction may be to fall to the ground with face downward, as travellers do in sand storms, till the heated blast has spent itself. If this is meant, the imagery is beautiful. It matters little which allusion was intended, either illustrates well. **For fear**—Hebrew, "From the face of the terror of the Lord." That is, Do what is directed to escape from the terror, etc., or the punishment which God will cause to sweep over the land. **And for the glory**, etc.—See verses 19-21.

11. The terror which was approaching, verse 10, is now seen as past. In Hebrew poetry scenes suddenly shift; a spirit of restlessness and non-repose characterizes it; it darts from object to object with lightning rapidity; it is alert with antitheses, and is never to be judged by rules governing the ancient Greek and modern dramatic poetry. The preceding verse sees judgment approaching; this verse describes the effect of it when passed. The haughty airs of men **shall be humbled**—in

and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down; and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. **12** For the day of the Lord of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low: **13** And upon all the cedars of Lebanon, that are high and lifted up, and upon all the oaks of Bashan, **14** And upon all the high mountains, and upon all the hills that are lifted up, **15** And upon every high

tower, and upon every fenced wall, **16** And upon all the ships of Tarshish, and upon all pleasant pictures. **17** And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low; and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. **18** And the idols he shall utterly abolish. **19** And they shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to

^r Chap. 4. 1; 11. 10, 11; 12. 1, 4; 24. 21; 25. 9; 26. 1; 27. 1, 2, 12, 13; 28. 5; 29. 18; 30. 23; 52. 6; Jer. 50. 7, 8; Ezekiel 38. 14, 19; 39. 11, 23; Hosea 2. 16, 18, 21; Joel 3. 18; Amos 9. 11; Obadiah 8; Mic. 4. 6; 5. 10; 7. 11, 12; Zeph. 3. 11, 16; Zech. 9. 16. —s Chap. 14. 8; 37. 24; Ezek. 31. 8; Zech. 11. 1, 2.

^t Chapter 30. 25. —u 1 Kings 10. 22. —5 Heb. pictures of desire. —r Verse 11. —w Verse 11. —6 Or, the idols shall utterly pass away. —æ Ver. 10; Hosea 10. 8; Luke 23. 30; Rev. 6. 16; 9. 6. —7 Heb. the dust. —y 2 Thess. 1. 9. —z Chap. 30, 32; Hag. 2. 6, 21; Heb. 12. 26.

the Hebrew, are "humbled"—are brought low. Past, present, and future run into each other to express permanent effect. **In that day**—In that sweep of time during which the principles of divine retribution have their full manifestation. No doubt the full result is seen in the overthrow of the State and the captivity at Babylon. It is idle to seek, with laborious literalness, fulfilments of predictions so generally expressed.

12–17. The lesson of these verses is, that Jehovah antagonizes among his chosen people every thing that compromises the holiness of his law.

12. The day, etc.—The solemn emphasis and reiteration given to these words are an intimation of some unusual event being about to occur. The shock of an earthquake, perhaps. See verse 19.

13. Cedars—Majestic trees in the Lebanon range, unsurpassed for beauty, strength, and building utility; often used as symbols of the great men in war and civil power. **Oaks of Bashan**—They abound on the east of the Jordan. The metaphor applies to men in Israel strong in their self-conscious independence and power. Before Jehovah their pride is to have a fearful fall.

14. High mountains . . . hills—Even these do not afford defence when Jehovah arises to avenge. The loftiest crags and fastnesses cannot then protect.

15. High tower—Uzziah had filled

the land with these, and with fenced walls of cities and towns; at Jerusalem especially. 2 Chron. xxvi, 9; Deut. xxviii, 52; Hosea viii, 14.

16. Ships of Tarshish—Meaning, perhaps, large and strong ships, suitable for distant voyages. "Tarshish" is supposed to be Tartessus, in the southwest of Spain. But it denotes, by way of figure, commerce in general. **Pleasant pictures**—Deut. iv, 15–18. It is not known that the Jews indulged in paintings. Whatever represented splendour may be all that is meant—a parallel sentence, a rhythmical effect merely. Jehovah is to destroy every thing in which the pride of man has indulged.

17. The proposition of verse 11 is here resumed, as if to say, The case is made out. "*So sinks the loftiness of man, and so bows the pride of man, and Jehovah alone is exalted.*"

18. The idols . . . abolish—As for them, they all shall pass away. Emphatic and sarcastic; a prediction fulfilled to the letter, by the captivity at Babylon. Before this event the Jews were madly prone to idolatry—but never since. Zech. xiii, 2. Query: In the line of what natural causation did the Almighty Providence effect such an utter change?

19. Holes of the rocks—In verse 10 similar language is used as a warning, but here it is a direct prediction. Idols, the whole mass of them, shall pass away into their natural utter nothingness. **When he ariseth**—

shake terribly the earth. **20** ^a In that day a man shall cast ^a his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, ^a which they made

^a Chapter 30, 22; 31, 7.—^b Heb. *the idols of his silver*, etc.

each one for himself to worship, to the moles and to the bats; **21** ^b To go into the clefts of the rocks, and into the

^a Or, *which they made for him*.—^b Verse 19.

Literally, *In his arising*; in God's addressing himself with terribly obvious purpose. **Shake...earth**—The intimation seems to be a recent earthquake, and all this prophetic speech may have taken advantage of the event when the worldly indifference of the people was for the time arrested. Amos speaks of the great earthquake in Uzziah's reign. Amos i, 1. God is the immediate cause of all physical phenomena, and he makes the physical serve the moral. In all his great comings to "shake terribly the earth," he uses the one phe-

nomenon as the means to engage serious attention, the other, as the end, to wit, to secure moral reformation.

20. In that day—The day of his specific coming herein detailed, in which his coming was a process culminating in the breaking up of the nation. **To the moles**—The precise animal here meant, in genus and species, is not known. Its home was in the ground, with holes to the surface. **Bats**—"Bats" are numerous in Palestine. They chiefly inhabit caves and the recesses of ruins, where they may be found hanging from the roofs of



BAT.

the habitations. Layard says, that on the occasion of a visit to a cavern, these noisome creatures compelled him to retreat. Their bodies are covered with a pale fur. Moles and bats are virtually blind, and dwell in dark places—places just despicable enough to cast

therein these miserable *nothings* called gods. The more costly the idols, the more significant is the hurling away of them in the fright and alarm of their former worshippers.

21. The warning begun in verse 10 continues. **To go**—This is an influ-

tops of the ragged rocks, ^c for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth. **22** ^a Cease ye from man, whose ^e breath is in his nostrils: for wherein is he to be accounted of?

^e Verses 10, 19. — ^d Psa. 146. 3; Jer. 17. 5. — ^e Job 27. 3.

tive of purpose—that these frightened idol worshippers may go into hiding-places away from the coming terror of Jehovah.

It is easy to conceive our prophet as delivering this fearful message in the temple courts at Jerusalem, or even in the royal courts, with his disciples about him (for it is presumable that he had a school of young prophets within or near Jerusalem) furnishing the choral refrains at verses 11, 17, 19, and 21.

22. Thus far the warning has been *Abjure idols*: now it is, Depend not on man. **Cease... from**—Let him alone. Human strength is impotent. **Whose breath is in his nostrils**—Gen. ii, 7. Whose life is transitory, precarious. **Wherein**—On what grounds, or, At what rates. **Is he to be accounted of**—That is, to be valued? No protection from man can be relied on. He is an entity, it is true, yet for actual source of help he is of but little more avail than senseless idols.

CHAPTER III.

The discourse continues, as the continuative **for** denotes. Having commenced (ii, 1-5) with a calm, attractive picture of a gloriously hopeful future, the prophet's eye glances over his audience only to bring him back at once to the incongruous character it bears, and the whole nation with it, to the peaceful, pure days of the Messiah in the far future. Then the impetuous oratory begins, as we have seen chap. ii, 11-22. A mass of conjurors, of gold and silver, of war-horses, of idols! The voice that began with Messiah's salvation is choked. A vision of judgment and destruction comes before the prophet, and he calls out to the people to hide themselves from the storm. The people are aroused. The prophet has gained one point—

CHAPTER III.

FOR, behold, the Lord, the Lord of hosts, ^a doth take away from Jerusalem and from Judah ^b the stay and the staff, the whole stay of bread, and the whole stay of water, **2** ^c The

^a Jer. 37. 21; 38. 9. — ^b Lev. 26. 26. — ^c See 2 Kings 24. 14.

their attention and their fear; possibly God has given him the aid of a natural earthquake to impress his lesson. A symbol that is quickly dashed, is dependence on cedars and ships—strong men in war, and state, and in commerce. All is made to seem such a frail reliance, that to escape quickly men yield their clutch on their idols as they flee, and they do as they are bidden, hurl them to "the moles and to the bats." The fact is made to grow on them, that the loftiest man must perish. His life hangs on a breath over which he has no power; how should one trust in him! In poetic dress the general principle is taught that idolatry and every thing to which it leads cannot stand. It shall be wiped out by severe national judgment and captivity.

In this chapter the application is made to Judah and Jerusalem in particular. Apparently the prophet explains in verses 1-7 the thought in the preceding verse on the non-reliance of man; that God was about to cripple, perhaps destroy, the leading men of Judah, and permit a state of anarchy.

1-7. Cease ye from man is now the order. **For behold**—Attention is challenged. **The Lord**—(*Ha-Adôn.*) "The Lord" as sovereign. **The Lord of hosts**—The self-existent God, the revealed God; God, as it were, rallying all his forces of angels and subordinate agencies of whatever kind—for such is virtually the meaning of "Jehovah of hosts." **Doth take away**—Is taking, or is about to take, away. **Stay... staff**—Both nearly the same word, but of different genders, the one masculine, the other feminine. Together they mean *every kind of support* on which they had depended. God was the true "stay" and "staff." Chap. x, 20; 1, 10. **Bread... water**—Judah's spiritual food here

mighty man, and the man of war, the judge, and the prophet, and the prudent, and the ancient, **3** The captain of fifty, and ¹ the honourable man, and the counsellor, and the cunning artificer, and the ² eloquent orator. **4** And I will give ⁴ children to be their princes, and babes shall rule over them. **5** And the people shall be oppressed, every one by another, and every one by his neighbour: the child shall behave himself proudly against the ancient, and the

¹ Heb. *a man eminent in countenance.*—² Or, *skilful of speech.*—⁴ Eccles. 10. 16.

symbolized. Civil prosperity depends on this. Verses 9, 10, 16-18. The "stay" and "staff" are now particularized.

2. 3. **Mighty man... man of war**

— Besides men, martial armaments are included. Uzziah had a widespread military organization. 2 Chron. xxvi, 11-15. **Prudent**—About the same as **prophet**. Men on secular principles occupied in divining future events. **Ancient**—Elders, heads of families. **The captain of fifty**—A title near in rank to that of the people. **The honourable**—A favourite of the people; of dignified aspect. **Artificer**—A maker of war weapons. **Eloquent orator**—Not this in our modern sense, but rather, an enchanter; literally, *whisperer*. Chapter viii, 19. Akin to "prudent."

4, 5. **Children to be their princes**

—A phrase descriptive of the evil condition of a state deprived of wise rulers. See conduct of Rehoboam, 1 Kings xii. **Babes**—Ignorant and incompetent persons. Did the prophet here look forth one hundred years, and describe what is stated as history in 2 Kings xxii-xxv? Grotius well calls this a state of anarchy; to the Hebrew tone of life a state intensely revolting.

6, 7. Nobody desires state-position in anarchy like this. **Take hold of his brother**—In a supplicating way, and then only on a kinsman, or one of his tribe. Outside of ties of blood no one ventures. **Hast clothing**—A large wardrobe, which was a mark of oriental wealth. **Be thou our ruler**—A like example is that of Jephthah, but in times when anarchy was less

base against the honourable. **6** When a man shall take hold of his brother of the house of his father, *saying*, Thou hast clothing, be thou our ruler, and *let* this ruin be under thy hand: **7** In that day shall he ³ swear, saying, I will not be a ⁴ healer; for in my house is neither bread nor clothing: make me not a ruler of the people. **8** For ⁵ Jerusalem is ruined, and Judah is fallen: because their tongue and their doings are against the Lord, to provoke the eyes of his

³ Heb. *lift up the hand*, Gen. 14. 22.—⁴ Heb. *binders up*.—⁵ Micah 3. 12.

desperate, and probably less general (Judges xi, 6) than that here represented. **In that day**—In that time of anarchy. **Shall he swear**—Literally, *lift up the hand*; this being the usual form of oath-taking. **Not be a healer**—Or, *binders up*; the chief proceeding in oriental surgery. The body politic has been too long and irrecoverably diseased. **In my house**—Powerful and wealthy though it has been, it is now impoverished; it has **neither bread nor clothing**. "It is customary for Eastern rulers to gather an immense quantity of clothes, for there fashions never alter."—*Chardin*. "The kings of Persia have great wardrobes, ... many habits to spare and to give away, on occasion, as presents."—*Lowth*. The picture here is that of extreme poverty as the result of a long continued ruinous civil and moral condition.

8. The causes of this ruin are now stated. Its character is implied in its causes. It is moral ruin, drawing after it, of course, ruin political and national. "Jerusalem reels, Judah falls," all because of **their tongue and their doings**. They have mocked God in pretended temple worship. They have at the same time insulted him in acts of idolatry among the hills, groves, and gardens. They have provoked **the eyes of his glory**. They have *affronted*—brazenly faced down—"the eyes of glory," which streamed forth in love for his faithful ones. The eye, as an outward sense, is the quickest to indicate thought and emotion—to light up with joy or flash in indignation. The word "glory" is a prob-

glory. **9** The show of their countenance doth witness against them; and they declare their sin as 'Sodom, they hide it not. Woe unto their soul! for they have rewarded evil unto themselves. **10** Say ye to the righteous, ^athat it shall be well with him: ^afor they shall eat the fruit of their doings. **11** Woe unto the wicked! ⁱit shall be ill with him: for the reward of his hands shall be ^egiven him.

^f Gen. 13. 13; 18. 20. 21; 19. 5.—^g Eccl. 8. 12.
—^h Psa. 128. 2.—ⁱ Psalm 11. 6; Eccles. 8. 13.
—⁵ Heb. done to him.—^k Verse 4.

able allusion to the *shekinah*, which, in its shining and its withdrawal, or darkening, gave outward expression to the emotions of Jehovah.

9. Show of...countenance—Its bold, staring effrontery declares, testifies, against them; reveals their own true character exactly. Thoughts only of evil are mirrored in their countenances, and are as clearly open to every one's view as were the open sins of **Sodom**. The meaning is not that their looks betray them, but that they attempt no concealment, **they hide it not. Woe unto their soul**—This expresses the highest abhorrence of their acts. **Rewarded evil unto themselves**—Reaped punishment as the only proper retribution.

10, 11. These verses express general truths. Their meaning is deep. All that is possible to think or feel from the two simple propositions, "It is well to be righteous," "It is ill to be wicked," cannot exceed what they mean. The reason for these truths here may be this: The word "Sodom" brought to the prophet the thought of Abraham and Lot; this thought suggested resemblance and contrast: resemblance pushed forward the bad men of the plains; contrast, the good man Lot; then both suggest the awards due to each. As the rule by which God governs and awards, the principle here expressed is true for all in the earth, the righteous and the wicked, but emphatically now true of the Jews to whom the prophet at once returns.

12. Through a vista of years the prophet sees the Jews much reduced in power, pusillanimous in character,

12 As for my people, ^kchildren are their oppressors, and women rule over them. O my people, ^lthey which lead thee cause thee to err, and ^mdestroy the way of thy paths. **13** The Lord standeth up ⁿto plead, and standeth to judge the people. **14** The Lord will enter into judgment with the ancients of his people, and the princes thereof: for ye have ^oeaten up ^pthe vineyard; the spoil of the poor ^qis in your houses.

^l Chap. 9. 16.—⁶ Or, they which call thee blessed.—⁷ Heb. swallow up.—^m Mic. 6. 2.
—⁸ Or, burnt.—ⁿ Chap. 5. 7; Matt. 21. 33.

enslaved to evil-doing, and so helpless in that slavery, that he says, **children**—that is, men of weakest moral force are allowed to overpower them; and **women**, women of the royal court, that is, from the royal harem, **rule over them**. The statement here seems made in a tone of contempt. The law as to the sexes seems reversed. (Gen. iii, 16.) The divine order was first invaded by Solomon, whose wives prattled to him about Chemosh and Milcom, and prevailed. **They which lead thee cause thee to err**—Compromises with idolatry are destructive of moral and civil order. **The way of thy paths**—The way appointed for Israel; the guide-marks of which along the whole way become obliterated, in so far as any taint of idolatry infests the heart of the people.

13. This headlong life of the nation cannot last. **The Lord standeth up**—He cometh forward (that is the verb's meaning) after sufficient trial and endurance. **To plead**—To litigate, to contend, to inflict punishment.

14. The parties are now distinctly named. **The ancients**—The elders, heads of houses and tribes, responsible representatives of the people. **Ye have**—The address is direct. The charge is against these guides. **Eaten up the vineyard**—Destroyed God's Church by subverting its purity. Ye have "eaten" (literally, burnt) this up. The same in effect as if it stood, "Ye have robbed my people;" and thus it better accords with the word **spoil**, plunder; the evidence of which is, that it **is in your houses**.

15 What mean ye *that* ye °beat my people to pieces, and grind the faces of the poor? saith the Lord God of hosts.

16 Moreover the Lord saith, Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with stretched forth necks and ° wanton eyes, walking and ° mincing

o Chap. 58. 4; Mic. 3. 2, 3. — 9 Heb. *deceiving with their eyes*. — 10 Or, *tripping nicely*.

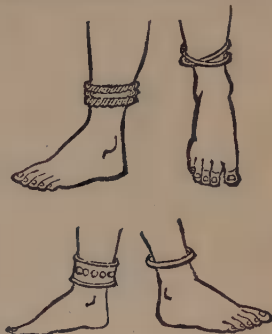
15. What mean ye—What induces such foul injustice? What motive, what right, impels such action toward the poor? A blow aimed at the public conscience, though parried just for that lawless time, nevertheless comes home some day with its full death stroke. **Grind the faces of the poor**—This signifies great oppression. To “grind” is to trample on. “Faces” is here equivalent to persons. The poor are claimed in the Scriptures (Amos ii, 6, 7, Micah iii, 2, etc.) as well as in the universal conscience, as objects of care and protection. In times when justice is prostrate, such as the prophet foresaw in Judah and Jerusalem, crushing oppression of the poor is the greatest social crime.

16. The course of thought which had been interrupted at verse 12 is here resumed. **Moreover the Lord saith**—In addition to what he had already said, as reasons for divine judgment yet to come on Judah and Jerusalem. **Because the daughters of Zion**—Or, the women of Jerusalem. **Are haughty**—Are proud. In the prosperous reign of Uzziah there was not only much wealth, but probably it was generally diffused. **And walk with stretched forth necks**—With ostentatious display of neck, perhaps to appear taller: the Septuagint, “with lofty neck.” **And wanton eyes**—With fascinating glance of eyes, or with attempts to allure, as they walked. **And mincing as they go**—Taking affectedly short steps. **Making a tinkling**—With anklets made of silver, or gold, or ivory; still used by upper class women in Syria, India, and Egypt.

17. Smite with a scab—Leprosy, no doubt, or its equivalent result. The latter seems the view of the Septuagint, the Targums, and the Syriac.

as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet: **17** Therefore the Lord will smite with ° a scab the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion, and the Lord will ° discover their secret parts. **18** In that day the Lord will take away the bravery of *their tinkling ornaments about their feet, and their*

p Deut. 28. 27. — 11 Heb. *make naked*. — q Chap. 47. 2, 3; Jer. 13. 22; Nahum 3. 5.



ANKLETS.

Few things are deemed more degrading to the Hebrew women than baldness. **Discover**—This was the highest disgrace. As items of their punishment, they are to be stripped of ornaments, made bald, and taken naked into captivity.

18, 19. In that day—The day of their coming punishment. **Bravery**—In chap. iv, 2 this word means *comely*. It is applied to different things: in chap. lx, 7, to the temple; in chap. lxiv, 11, to Jerusalem. May it not here mean *finery*? (There is difficulty in determining the meaning of terms in these verses, because many of them are used only here in the Bible. According to best means at hand, scholars have made them out, generally, as here given.) **Cauls**—A network covering



CAULS.

¹² cauls, and *their* round tires like the moon, **19** The ¹³ chains, and the bracelets, and the ¹⁴ mufflers, **20** The bonnets, and the ornaments of the legs, and

¹² Or, *networks*.—¹⁷ Judges 8, 21.—¹³ Or, *sweet balls*.

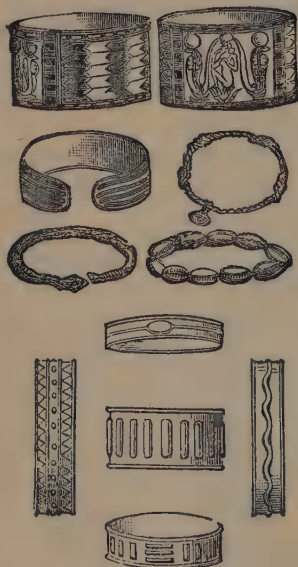
for the top of the head, usually made of silk. According to Fürst, they are little suns or spangles. **Round tires**—Literally, *moons*, in crescent form; used, perhaps, to deck the network veils. **Chains**—More properly



EAR-DROPS.

eardrops; resembling amber drops.

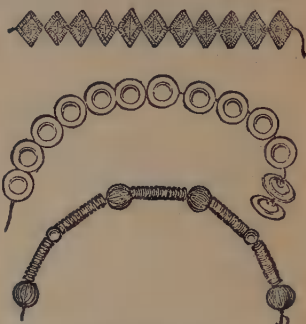
Bracelets—For the wrists, or collars



BRACELETS AND ARMLETS.

the headbands, and the ¹⁵ tablets, and the earrings, **21** The rings, and nose jewels, **22** The changeable suits of apparel, and the mantles, and the wim-

¹⁴ Or, *spangled ornaments*.—¹⁵ Hebrew, *houses of the soul*.



NECK COLLARS.

for the neck. **Mufflers**—Veils, light and tremulous; "a veil for the face used by higher-class ladies."

20. The bonnets—Used of priestly head-bands, Exodus xxxix, 28; it probably means here, ladies' caps, or similar ornamental headdresses. **Ornaments of the legs**—Short stepping chains from one foot to the other, to give a measured gait, (the "mincing" of verse 16;) these were attached to the ankle rings, verse 16. **Headbands**—Literally, *girdles*. In Jer. ii, 32, the same word is used for "sashes," especially as worn by a bride. **Tablets**—Singularly, the literal meaning of the Hebrew is, *houses of the soul*, or *breath*; hence, *smelling boxes*, which were carried about the person.

21. Rings—Usually the word denotes signet rings. But here, finger rings, earrings, or rings in general; gems with inscriptions of magic formulas. **Nose jewels**—Suspended from the pierced cartilage of the left nostril.

22. What is now mentioned consists of *entire* articles. Hitherto only single ornaments were named. **Changeable suits**—Put on and off on occasions; holiday dresses. A variety of these indicated wealth. **Mantles**—Flowing upper garments; fuller tunics with

ples, and the crisping pins, **23** The glasses, and the fine linen, and the hoods, and the veils. **24** And it shall come to pass, *that* instead of sweet smell there shall be stink; and instead of a girdle a

s Chap. 22, 12; Micah 1, 16.

sleeves. **Wimples**—A head covering; intended, perhaps, for a cloak or shawl, thrown over head and shoulders. **Crisping pins**—A strange rendering of what seems to mean *money bags, purses*. But it is one of the most difficult words to determine.

23. Glasses—Mirrors made of polished metal, carried on the person. **Fine linen**—Inner wear, undergarments. **Hoods**—Turbans, mitres, diadems. Chap. lx, 3; Zechariah iii, 5. **Veils**—Coverings of the face, minus the eyes, dropping to near the feet. Distinct from "mufflers," or smaller veils. In 1 Cor. xi, 10 used as a token of woman's subjection.

rent; and instead of well set hair "baldness; and instead of a stomacher a girdling of sackcloth; and burning instead of beauty. **25** Thy men shall fall by the sword, and thy ¹⁶ mighty in the war.

16 Heb. *might*.

24. It shall come to pass—The divine judgment against this luxurious finery is, that in place of **sweet smell**—aromatics, spicy fragrance, and the like, upon the garments of the person, (Roberts says, "No one ever enters a company without being perfumed,") **there shall be stink**—a stench from dead bodies. **Instead of a girdle**—An ornament for the waist; used, also, to hold up the gathers of the long outer robe when engaged in active employment. **A rent**—Better, *a rope*; either an emblem of poverty or of captivity: in the latter case the proud females being thereby hauled along in the train of conquerors. **Well set**



ARTICLES OF EGYPTIAN TOILET.

hair—Hair curiously braided and adorned. **Baldness**—In this connexion made so by the razor, the hair being shaved off; as conquerors of old time resorted to the last degree of humiliations upon their captives. **Stomacher**—It is matter of uncertainty what is meant by this. Most concur in its being a plaited or stiffened ornament worn on the breast, or a broad plaited girdle for the breast. **A gird-**

ing of sackcloth—The material only changed. "Sackcloth" was of the coarsest material, and worn only in affliction. **Burning**—A sunburnt face, from the exposures of captivity and slavery. This, instead of the fair complexion and the well adorned person in a highly civilized and luxurious life.

25. And the proximate cause of all this shall be the profuse slaughter of the male population. **Thy men**—The

26 'And her gates shall lament and mourn; and she *being* ¹⁷ desolate " shall sit upon the ground.

CHAPTER IV.

AND ^a in that day seven women

ⁱ Jer. 14. 2; Lam. 1. 4.—¹⁷ Or, *emptied*. Heb. *cleansed*.—^a Lam. 2. 10.—^a Chap. 2. 11, 17.—^b 2 Thess. 3. 12.—¹ Hebrew, *let thy*

men of Judah and Jerusalem, for these are here evidently addressed.

26. Her gates—A poetical soliloquizing. The "gates" of Jerusalem were places busy with concourses occupied in imparting news, in trades, and in settling of disputes. **Lament and mourn**—The usual daily, commonplace air of the above scenes is to be changed to loud wailings, such as Orientals well know how to make. **Sit upon the ground**—This was the posture of grief and mourning; and so Judea is represented in the medals struck on the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans.



JEWISH CAPTIVES.

The destruction and captivity, however, here looked forward to by the prophet, was probably the first destruction of the city by Nebuchadnezzar.

CHAPTER IV.

The same prophecy continues, and hardly should have been disconnected from chapter iii.

1. The first verse completes the picture of domestic desolation on account of the scarcity of male inhabitants, destroyed by war or carried to Babylon

shall take hold of one man, saying, We will ^b eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel; only ¹ let us be called by thy name, ² to take away ^c our reproach. **2** In that day shall ^d the branch of the Lord be ³ beautiful and

name be called upon us.—² Or, *take thou away.*—^c Luke 1. 25.—^d Jer. 23. 5; Zech. 3. 8; 6. 12.—³ Heb. *beauty and glory.*

as captives. **In that day**—That calamitous period described as yet to come to Jerusalem. **Seven women** An indefinite, but a large, full number. Native modesty is laid aside; all sue to become wives to one man, on account of the great reproach of unwedded life among Jewish women. For this, they will even surrender their rights of dowry and support.

The primeval institution of marriage (Gen. ii, 24) permitted the union only of one man and one woman. But, long before the times of Moses, morals on this subject suffered degradation. Unlimited polygamy became, in the East, the rule, not the exception; nay, worse than this, *prostitution* of females and boys became a religious institution.* See Whedon's note on Rev. ii, 14, 15. The disgraceful evil of prostitution Moses required to be punished and rooted out by the severest laws. Polygamy he suffered, because compelled by social necessity; but he aimed so to regulate it that in the end it would virtually cease to exist—a fact near to realization till monarchy reopened the floodgates of the evil. Wars so diminished the number of males, and the reproach of childlessness among females was so great, that in the text above, though the situation was evil, the sentiment in the urgent request of the women was in their own estimation virtuous. "The times of this ignorance God winked at, but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent."

2. And now the counterpart to this fearful prophecy, which was begun in chap. ii, 1-5, is resumed, and brings this long discourse to an end. Isaiah, as with a single bound, retires from

* See "Phoenicia and Israel," published by Phillips & Hunt: an important work in Old Testament exegesis bearing on this subject.

glorious, and the fruit of the earth *shall be* excellent and comely ⁴ for them that are escaped of Israel. **3** And it shall come to pass, *that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem,* ⁵ shall be called holy, *even every one that is* ⁶ written ⁷ among the living in Jerusalem: **4** When ⁸ the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the

⁴ Heb. *for the escaping of Israel.*—*e* Ch. 60. 21.—*f* Phil. 4. 3; Rev. 3. 5.—⁵ Or, *to life.*
—*g* Mal. 3. 2, 3.

the dreary scene he has pictured, and is again rejoicing in engrossment with the future Messianic times. **In that day**—The day of Messiah, the antitype of David. **Shall the branch**—**צֶמַח**,

(*tzemach*,) *sprout*, the outgrowth from Jehovah. Jer. xxiii, 5; xxxiii, 15. In these citations the word "branch" directly, and in other passages indirectly, refers evidently to the Messiah. It is that which shoots up, or sprouts, from the root of a tree. The Messiah is, in chap. xi, 1, 10, (where see notes,) said to be a root of Jesse. David is ever the type of a more glorious ruler, whose sway shall be over the whole earth. **Beautiful . . . glorious**—It shall be for ornament and glory. Nouns, in the Hebrew, expressive of quality indeed, but of stronger meaning as nouns than as adjectives. **Fruit . . . excellent and comely**—Literally, *for majesty and honour*. The Messiah's reign shall ennoble its subjects by the moral beauty, glory, dignity, and honour conferred on them. **Them that are escaped of Israel**—The remnant, the small number that escaped calamities. The emphasis is not on small number, but on the "escaped of Israel." Figuratively this means those who continue true to Jehovah; who, against all odds, remain his firm and believing followers, of whom those who stood the test at Babylon, and were restored to Jerusalem, were types. The Messiah's reign is to extend on to the end of the world.

3, 4. He that is left in Zion—The true descendants of the few who, amid the immoralities of Jerusalem life, and

spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning. **5** And the Lord will create upon every dwellingplace of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, ^a a cloud and smoke by day, and ^b the shining of a flaming fire by night: for ^c upon all the glory *shall be* ^d a defence. **6** And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the daytime from the heat, and ^e for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain.

^a Exod. 13. 21.—^b Zech. 2. 5.—^c Or, *above.*
—^d Heb. *a covering*, chap. 3. 14.—^e Chap. 25. 4.

despite surrounding temptations to the contrary, preserve themselves pure and loyal to Jehovah. **Shall be called holy**—*Shall be holy*. The idiom "shall be called" means this. **Written among the living**—Those who are alive in Jerusalem; typically, who continue unto eternal life. **Filth of the daughters of Zion**—Their vain-gloriousness; their silly and demoralizing pride and defilements. The judgments upon Judah and Jerusalem are to remove—**wash away**—these, and the guiltiness of the people likewise. **Spirit of burning**—An intensified expression of the idea of the previous clause. The people, by a long but thorough process of spiritual cleansing, shall cease to love idolatry and crime, and shall learn truly to serve Jehovah.

5. When such times come, **the Lord will create**—Renew, and make holy. **Every dwelling place**—Every household in **mount Zion**. "Zion," the local, prefigures "Zion," the universal—the "Zion" of all ages and places. The palmy days of specific revelations and protections in the wilderness were a type of what, in a degree indefinitely more glorious, shall be wrought upon the "Zion" of the future ages.

6. Tabernacle—That of Moses in the wilderness prefigures God's pavilion, which, by Messiah, he spreads everywhere over his people. As its bridegroom, Messiah overshadows his Church. He is its canopy (an idea of which the canopy at the oriental wedding is the symbol) to shield from fierce heats and violent rains; in other words, he secures perfect protection

CHAPTER V.

NOW will I sing to my well beloved
a song of my beloved touching
his vineyard. My well beloved hath a

α Psa. 80, 8; Cant. 8, 12; ch. 27, 2; Jer. 2, 21; Matt. 21, 33; Mark 12, 1; Luke 20, 9.

from all moral disasters. This security the renewed Jerusalem, or Zion, shall enjoy for ever—not merely in the best days of the Church on earth, but in the eternally better days of the New Jerusalem above. Rev. xxi.

The prophecy begun at chapter ii closes here. Its leading thought is the overthrow of the false glory of Israel, and the perfect establishment of its true glory by means of judgment and of severe discipline. Doubtless the prophecy covers the whole area of history to Judah as a nation, and an indefinite outlook thence onward into Messianic times. The themes touched upon here are often a burden with this prophet in other modes of warning, illustration, or enforcement, nearly all of which have more or less the same hopeful closing.

CHAPTER V.

Quite independently of what goes before or after, this chapter opens with a parable, and is thought to have some points of contrast with the preceding prophecy, especially in intensified touches upon vices therein noticed. This would seem to suggest the probable similarity of date, and some similarity of historical facts, in both.

The parable in verses 1-7 is marked by great aptness and propriety. And it is instructive to trace present oriental lines in vineyard cultivation. Van Lennep, in his *Bible Lands*, says: "The process of planting a vineyard and guarding it with a wall or hedge, may be described as follows: The ground having been selected and traced, a ditch is dug along the outside, three or four feet in width and two in depth, the earth being piled upon its inner edge. Into this pile stout poles are set about four feet in height, and branches are twisted and woven in among them, making a thick and solid fence. A vineyard is culti-

vineyard in ¹a very fruitful hill: **2** And he ²fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the

1 Heb. the horn of the son of oil.—2 Or, made a wall about it.

vated for successive centuries, but the vines must be occasionally changed, and at such a time the ground lies fallow for several years. The Hebrews left their vineyards untilled every seventh year, as well as every fiftieth, or jubilee, year. Lev. xxv, 4, 5, 11. In process of time, many wild plants, briars, and some few shrubs and trees, spring up and grow within the shadow of the hedge, and, fed by moisture collected in the ditch, make the enclosure more solid and capable of resisting incursions from man or beast. Still the husbandman is obliged, from time to time, to examine all parts of the hedge and close up any gap or breach made by foxes, jackals, hares, badgers, and still more diminutive hedgehogs. It is only when the vineyard proves unproductive, or the grapes become in quality hopelessly bad, that the proprietor neglects the hedge, and allows it to fall to pieces, so that even the wild boar may come and join in its destruction."

1, 2. Now will I sing—Rather, *Let me sing*. The singing was in the form of chanting. Such was probably the mode of the delivery of Isaiah's prophecy concerning this "vineyard"—the Jewish Church. **To my...beloved**—In honour of my beloved, Jehovah, Israel's manifested deity. **Vineyard**—The vineyard symbolizes Jehovah's people—the tribes of Israel. **Fruitful hill**—Literally, *on the horn of the son of oil*; that is, a high and very fat and fertile ridge. **He fenced it**—Girded the holy land with isolating limits, and separated Israel from the nations with isolating institutions and laws. **Gathered out the stones**—A necessary work in preparing for a "vineyard." The expression symbolizes the casting out the idolatrous tribes that encumbered the land. **Planted...choicest vine**—The noble stock of Abraham. **Tower in...midst**

midst of it, and also ³made a winepress therein: ⁴and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes. ⁵And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, ⁶judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard. ⁷What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes? ⁸And now go

to; I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard: ⁹"I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up; ¹⁰and break down the wall thereof, and it shall be ¹¹'trodden down': ¹²6 And I will lay it waste: it shall not be pruned, nor digged; but there shall come up briars and thorns: I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it. ¹³7 For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of

³ Hebrew, *hewed*.—⁴ Deut. 32. 6; chapter 1. 2, 3.

^c Rom. 3. 4.—^d Psa. 80. 12.—⁴ Heb. *for a treading*.

—Vineyards and gardens required to be watched, and towers and booths, the former especially, in established vineyards were erected. These terms

signify watchful protection: they may also denote the moral influence of the temple and its worship in Jerusalem. **Winepress**—A press was a neces-



WINEPRESS.

sary equipment to a rich vineyard. The expressed juice of the grape is here symbolical of the refreshing spiritual strength derived from the worship of Jehovah. **He looked**—He expected, awaited, a good crop; symbolic of a fruitful religious character. But **wild grapes** only appeared; a bad fruitage, emblematic of bad men, bad principles, base idolatry.

3-7. So far the parable is left unexplained to the prophet's hearers. And to them the appeal is, "What is to be done?" Then the explanation begins, but still in a parable. The inquirer answers his own questions. **Will take away...hedge thereof**—An Eastern "hedge" is composed of thorny plants, which, densely placed in rows

around a ground, forms a strong protection against intruders.

The answer in verse 4 is in bitter irony. It implies that more would be done if possible, but from the rebellious conduct of Israel that is impossible. It is also God's divine self-justification. He had done all the best vintner could do for the vineyard, but it *would* be obstinately bad. Waste and desolation will now ensue, and tempests and war shall at times sweep over it with fury. Rains will be withheld, and famines and general depopulation will follow. In plain words, this "vineyard" of the Lord—of the prophet's "beloved"—**is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant.**

Judah ⁵his pleasant plant: and he looked for judgment, but behold ⁶oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry.

8 Woe unto them that join ⁹house to house, *that* lay field to field, till *there* be no place, that ⁷they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth! 9 ¹⁰In mine ears *said* the Lord of hosts, ⁹Of a truth many houses shall be desolate,

5 Heb. *plant of his pleasures*.—6 Heb. *a scab*.—7 Micah 2. 2.—8 Heb. *ye*.—9 Chap. 22. 14.—10 Or, *This is in mine ears*, saith the LORD, etc.

Thence follows the announcement of a series of disciplinary woes, with an enumeration of the popular vices that cause them.

First woe—upon great land monopoly, 8-10.

8. [Join house to house...field to field]—The building of long city blocks, and forming immense estates, by monopolizing landholders. **No place**—Between the vast landed estates the small farmer was crowded out, “no place” being left for him, and he was turned adrift or reduced to serfdom. Tendencies to such concentration of estates in the hands of great landlords arise in times of great prosperity both in England and America. **Alone...earth**—Or, rather, *land*. The great feudal mansions would dot the whole of Judea, each in solitary grandeur. For a similar picture in the Roman empire consult our note on Jas. v, 6. Micah ii, 2 contemporaneously with Isaiah confirms his description. The **woe** on this landed aristocracy was decay and desolation.]

9, 10. **Many houses shall be desolate**—Without occupant, desolation dwelling there, because of the invasion invoked below, in verses 26-30. **Great and fair**—Aristocratic though they be. **Ten acres**—An acre was a space of ground ploughed by a man with a yoke of oxen in one day, about three fourths of an English acre. Ten acres of vineyard, it is estimated, (Kay.) might be expected ordinarily to produce 32,000 pints of wine, or 500 baths, instead of which it is here said they shall produce but **one**. **A homer**—About ten bushels, enough to

even great and fair, without inhabitant. **10** Yea, ten acres of vineyard shall yield one ⁸bath, and the seed of a homer shall yield an ephah.

11 ¹²Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, *that* they may follow strong drink; that continue until night, till wine ¹⁰inflame them! **12** And ¹¹the harp and the viol, the tabret and

9 Hebrew, *If not*, etc.—10 See Ezekiel 43. 11.—11 Proverbs 23. 29, 30; Ecclesiastes 10. 16; verse 22.—12 Or, *pursue them*.—13 Amos 6. 5, 6.

sow ten acres, but here only one bushel is promised. **A bath** was a liquid measure, in capacity one tenth of a “homer,” a dry measure. Ezekiel xiv, 11-14. God directly permits devastation like this as a punishment for these specified sins. Compare Leviticus xxvi, 20 with Isaiah xxiv, 7 and Joel i, 10-12.

Second woe—on high-living and revelry, 11, 12.

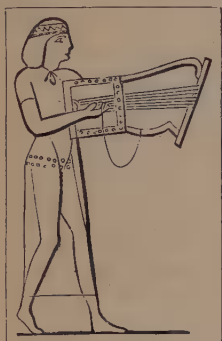
In the train of the luxury of the times, drunkenness follows. The woe is deserved because (observe the particularity of the statement) appetite seeks gratification from early morn, through the day, and into night.

11, 12. **Strong drink**—A drink of toppers, (שֵׁכָר, *shakar*), made from dates, grain, grapes, and whatever else will produce intoxication. **Till wine**—“Wine,” here, is from the word יַיִן, *yayin*, a term generic of this liquid, whether fermented or not; but here it is fermented and intoxicating, for the latter fact is specifically stated. “Strong drink” is also stated here to originate revelry, and music becomes in request. **The harp**—The same in kind that David used in chanting his odes. [For figure of the instrument and mode of handling see the next page.] **The viol**—This was of wood, made hollow, and overstrung. The original word, נֶבֶל, *nebel*, is generic of the ancient guitar, four forms of which have been taken from the ruins of Egypt. **The tabret**—A kind of drum, perhaps with strings attached.

pipe and wine, are in their feasts: but ¹⁰they regard not the work of the LORD, neither consider the operation of his hands.

13 Therefore my people are gone into captivity, ¹¹because *they have* no knowledge: and ¹²their honourable men *are* famished, and their multitude dried up with thirst. **14** Therefore hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure: and their glory, and

℣ Job 34. 27; Psalm 28. 5.—*℣* Hosea 4. 6.—*m* Chapter 1. 3; Luke 19. 44.—*℣* Heb. *their glory are men of famine.*



EGYPTIAN HARP.

The pipe—A flute or flageolet. **They regard not**—God is not in all their thoughts. **They look not toward his work...** the operation of his hands. These parallel words of course mean the same thing, namely, What God teaches men through nature, providence, and revelation; hence, these instructors being overlooked, God is compelled to teach them by a severer discipline—by famine and captivity.

13. Therefore—In consequence of the delinquencies that bring down both these woes. **My people**—Still His, (iii, 12,) but therefore all the more to be chastised. Amos iii, 2. **No knowledge**—They were heedless of what the consequences must be. These they might have known, and ought to have known and heeded. **Their**—Literally, *his*; his people of honour, or **honourable men**, are men of starvation, famished from want of food and drink. This is clearly the sense. Hence, great mortality among

their multitude, and their pomp, and he that rejoiceth, shall descend into it. **15** And ¹³the mean man shall be brought down, and the mighty man shall be humbled, and the eyes of the lofty shall be humbled: **16** But the LORD of hosts shall be exalted in judgment, and ¹⁴God that is holy shall be sanctified in righteousness. **17** Then shall the lambs feed after their manner, and the waste places of ¹⁵the fat ones shall strangers

n Chapter 2. 9, 11, 17.—*℣* Or, *the holy God.* Hebrew, *the God the holy.*—*o* Chapter 10. 15.

them. Hence, too, the next **therefore**.

14, 15. Hell—In the Hebrew, *sheol*, to which, in the New Testament, the corresponding term is *hades*. The term *sheol* never means the grave, but always *the invisible domain of the dead*, whether referring to souls, as usually, or to bodies. See Dr. Burr's Excursus on Job vii, 21. The famished multitudes are making *sheol* populous with newly departed ones. Hence, **enlarged herself** means "enlarged" her capacity; and **without measure** imports ambition for more extensive limits than are decreed to her. **Their glory... multitude... pomp**, etc.—The pronoun "their" doubtless refers to Jerusalem, the fallen Zion, and the nouns belonging to it are the noisy, revelling inhabitants thereof. The common mass, **mean... mighty... lofty**, are seen tumbling daily into *sheol* together. Chap. xiv, where see notes.

16. The pomp of ¹⁶defiant man is humbled. But the **Lord of hosts**, he who has at his service all holy ones and agencies, is **exalted in judgment**, that is, in the exercise of his justice. The future tenses of the Hebrew, here, imply that divine principles are eternally fixed and true. **Sanctified in righteousness**, namely, at the final restoration of Israel.

17. Then—In the day when Jehovah is "sanctified" by Israel. **Lambs**—any body's flocks—(defined in the next parallel member of the verse) **shall feed after their manner**, that is, at their pleasure, (literally, *at or according to their word*.) over the fields of restored Israel. In other words, they shall feed as in their own pasture.

cat. **18** Woe unto them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as it were with a cart rope: **19** ^pThat say, Let him make speed, and hasten his work, that we may see it: and let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel draw nigh and come, that we may know it!

20 Woe unto them ¹³that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!

21 Woe unto *them that are* ^awise in

^p Chap. 61. 5; Jer. 17. 15; Amos 5. 18; 2 Pet. 3. 3, 4.—¹³ Heb. *that say concerning evil, it is good, etc.*—^a Prov. 3. 7; Romans 1. 22; 12. 16.

Strangers—Nomadic tribes, Gentiles, the present Arabs, and any others who shall be their successors. The "strangers" are allowed to eat only the **waste places of the fat ones** of God's true Israel.

Third woe—upon the energetic and defiant transgressors, 18, 19.

18. Draw iniquity—[The truly muscular sinners, who put their pluck and power into the business of sin: so that they are like very stout pullers who draw the greatest cartloads with the strongest of ropes. Yet the **cords** that bind them to the huge loads of **iniquity** they carry are but **cords of vanity**, of infatuated folly.]

19. Let him make speed—In a tone of defiance they say, Let him come on. **And hasten his work**—His work of direful providence and threatened judgment. **That we may see it**—We are ready for him. When he does what he threatens, we will believe him. **Counsel**—The prophet's predictions; evident from the words **Holy One of Israel**, which not they, but only the prophet, would use. In effect they say: "The days are prolonged, and every vision faileth." Ezek. xii, 22. We doubt their truth. Let him show his hand in these threatened woes. Only then can we believe you, his prophet."

Fourth woe—on the reversers of right and wrong, 20.

It takes but little time for such sinners wholly to reverse and uproot all

their own eyes, and prudent ¹⁴in their own sight! **22** ^rWoe unto *them that are* mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink: **23** Which ^sjustify the wicked for reward, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him! **24** Therefore ^tas ^uthe fire devoureth the stubble, and the flame consumeth the chaff, so ^vtheir root shall be as rottenness, and their blossom shall go up as dust: because they have cast away the law of the LORD of hosts, and despised the word

¹⁴ Heb. *before their face.*—^r Verse 11.—^s Prov. 17. 15; 24. 24.—^t Exod. 15. 7.—^u Heb. *the tongue of fire.*—^v Job 18. 16; Hosea 9. 16; Amos 2. 9.

moral distinctions, hence another woe is pronounced upon such.

20. That call evil good—Those who call "evil," "good," and "good," "evil," to whom right is to be shunned, and wrong to be preferred; to whom the truth is a lie, and a lie is the truth. The woe is on such for their villainous attempts utterly to deprave the moral principles of the people.

Fifth woe—on the scornful self-conceit of errorists, 21.

21. Wise...prudent—Those who conceive they possess the highest wisdom as against God's wisdom, (administrative wisdom,) thus upsetting ordained social, civil, and moral law. This picture is more vividly given in Rom. i, 18, 22, 23.

Sixth woe—on public dissoluteness, 22, 23.

Drunkards, too, again receive their woe; (see verse 11 :) where the people indulge in thoughtless, rollicking dissoluteness.

22, 23. Drink wine...strong drink—Here the terrible evil is contemplated as affecting those intrusted with the administrative interests of the nation. How can magistrates with reeling brain and besotted soul adjudge the rights of the poor and the weak?

24. Therefore—The general subject of destructive judgments is here resumed from verse 14. **As the fire devoureth**—Very like the stubble and chaff by fire shall Judah's glory dis-

of the Holy One of Israel. **25** ^v Therefore is the anger of the LORD kindled against his people, and he hath stretched forth his hand against them, and hath smitten them: and ^w the hills did tremble, and their carcasses *were* ¹⁶ torn in the midst of the streets. ^x For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand *is* stretched out still.

26 ^v And he will lift up an ensign to the nations from far, and will ² hiss unto them from ^a the end of the earth: and, behold, ^b they shall come with speed swiftly: **27** None shall be weary nor stumble among them; none shall slumber nor sleep; neither ^c shall the

^v 2 Kings 22, 13, 17.—^w Jer. 4, 24.—¹⁶ Or, *as dung*.—^x Lev. 26, 14, etc.; chap. 9, 12, 17, 21; 10, 4.—^y Chap. 11, 12.—^z Chap. 7, 18.—^a Deut. 28, 49; Psalm 72, 8; Mal. 1, 11.

appear; root and branch it shall be burned up and pass off in air as smoke.

25. The declaration just made is virtually repeated here, probably as a backing to the closing refrain. The verbs of this verse are of the prophetic preterite for future; that is, the ideal standpoint is in the future, from which the prophet sees, in the past, wave after wave of divine judgment rapidly following each other over the nation. **For all this**—In all this, or notwithstanding all this, God shall inflict still other judgments. Though the blows be heavy, his **anger**, or ethical intuition, abates not, because his judgments do not, as intended, bring the people to repentance. Lev. xxvi, 18, 23, 27. (See this dirge-like strain repeated in chapter ix, 12, 17, 27, and x, 4.)

The foreign invaders summoned to execute judgment, 26–30.

26–30. An ensign—A signal to nations from afar—Assyrians, Babylonians, Parthians, Scythians, perhaps, and finally Romans. **And will hiss**—This illustrates the preceding words, and is an allusion to the practice of Orientals in managing bees. They hiss or whistle (Zech. x, 8) in calling swarms from and to their lives. So shall the called armies from afar be obedient and powerful in action and speed. From across the whole earth they shall come swiftly.

girdle of their loins be loosed, nor the latchet of their shoes be broken: **28** ^a Whose arrows *are* sharp, and all their bows bent, their horses' hoofs shall be counted like flint, and their wheels like a whirlwind: **29** Their roaring *shall be* like a lion, they shall roar like young lions; yea, they shall roar, and lay hold of the prey, and shall carry *it* away safe, and none shall deliver *it*. **30** And in that day they shall roar against them like the roaring of the sea: and if *one* ^w look unto the land, behold darkness *and* ¹⁷ sorrow; ¹⁸ and the light is darkened in the heavens thereof.

^b Joel 2, 7.—^c Dan. 5, 6.—^d Jer. 5, 16.—^e Chap. 8, 22; Jer. 4, 23; Lam. 3, 2; Ezekiel 32, 7, 8.—¹⁷ Or, *distress*.—¹⁸ Or, *when it is light, it shall be dark in the destructions thereof*.

Their pace shall be without weariness, without demand for sleep, without stumbling, without impeding loosened girdle or sandals. On they come, with arrows sharp, bows bent, hoofs of horses rock proof, and chariots of war flying. On they come, with shouts, as if for certain victory, and they snatch away their prey at a single bound—no one resisting. All warring nations, from very early times, made large use of the horse, which to Israel was forbidden, in order to keep the nation religious and peaceful. But horses and mules came all at once into fashion in the reigns of David and Solomon. Horses, inured to rocky bridle paths, seldom fail of foot up and down mountain steep. As anciently Israel and other world powers, so now Bedouins, Circassians, and Tartars, never shoe their horses, whose faint sense of feeling in their feet secures their surefootedness. The prey which these on-rushing armies are seeking is JUDAH; but it adds to the gloom of the prophecy that Judah is not mentioned. It seems hard for the prophet to let the word pass his lips.

30. In that day they shall roar—In this description the transitions are spirited and beautiful. First, the change is from the enemy's rapid movement to his roaring in expectation of speedy victory; and now, from his roaring as a lion to a roaring as the sea. "Israel is threatened by the

CHAPTER VI.

IN the year that ^aking Uzziah died I ^bsaw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and ^chis

^a 2 Kin. 15. 7. — ^b 1 Kin. 22. 19; John 12. 41; Rev.

raging sea, and, looking landward, sees it growing dark there, until, after being fluctuating, the darkness becomes total."—*Alexander*.

CHAPTER VI.

The Inaugural Vision, 1-4.

[This could not be an inauguration of Isaiah to the prophetic office, for that he had filled during Uzziah's reign, (see chap. i, 1,) and probably the last preceding four chapters (ii-v) are records of some of his previous publications. It seems more properly the inauguration of a new and fearful period in Judah's theocratic history; marking the crisis of hopelessness, the nation's utter giving over, at the close of good Uzziah's reign. The divine Presence is in the holy of holies, and a herald is called for, and the prophet answers. His message (verses 9-13) announces that such is now the state of Judah's mind that all preaching will harden the heart, and that the sentence of long desolation is now pronounced, its execution certain, its duration for ever, except for a remnant which will return from the banishment and produce the Messiah.]

1. **I saw**—An insight into the invisible world. The prophet's mind is in communication with heaven, but his mode of apprehension is by *symbol*. The holy of holies in the temple, with the veil removed, is the scene where the vision occurs. It is told us, in John xii, 41, that the "Lord," = Jehovah, whom Isaiah saw in this vision, was the yet unincarnated Jesus. [Compare the much sublimer theophany of Rev. iv, where see notes. Isaiah gives the apocalypse of Jerusalem's downfall, John of the mystical Babylon's.] In this vision the beholder sees the sovereign Jehovah on his **throne, high and lifted up**, with the folds of his **train**, or skirts, filling all the temple. Above the throne were standing

train filled the temple. **2** Above it stood the seraphim: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and ^cwith twain he covered his feet, and with twain

4. 2. — 1 Or, *the skirts thereof*. — c Ezek. 1. 11.

or hovering, as attendant ministers before the ineffably glorious One, **seraphim**, or *burning ones*; beings with the radiance and glory of fire—an essence, so to call it—which symbolized certain intense qualities of character. The word is here only used with this sense in Scripture. It is from שֵׂרָפִים

(*saraph*), *to burn*, and the being is evidently spoken of as wearing a human form, with brilliant fiery appearance, covered with wings. [This word, *to burn*, is often used in the Old Testament, and for some reason the noun *saraph*, *burner*, signifies a *serpent*. Rabbi Solomon says, (quoted by Barnes,) "serpents are called *seraphim*, because they burn men with the poison of their teeth." Better, however, is perhaps the suggestion of Nägelsbach, (Lange's *Bibelwerk*,) that serpents were called *burners* from the resemblance of their vibratory creeping to the vibrations of a flame; they were *flamers*. And these present holy beings are called *burners*, not as serpents, but as representing, or, as we may say, *incarnating*, the burning, consuming purity and holiness of God. Hence their ascription, **holy**, to God, indicates their own holy nature. They are pure flames of purity and love; and though seen in repose by the prophet—they have a radiant human form—yet we may conceive that when on the wing, sent forth by Jehovah, they may become (what the flying flamingo of the south seems to be) a *darting flame*. As fire they either purify or destroy, as the object they touch may be; they purified the prophet, they consumed the guilty people, all save the final remnant.

2. **Above it**—Rather, *above Him*; that is, as winged beings, *higher than* the divine Occupant of the throne, hovering around when in motion, standing like choristers in a gallery when still. **With twain**—Two pairs of the six

he did fly. **3** And ²one cried unto another, and said, ⁴"Holy, holy, holy, *is* the LORD of hosts: ^{3c}*the whole earth is full of his glory.* **4** And the posts of the ⁴door moved at the voice of him that cried, and ¹the house was filled with smoke.

5 ^{*}Then said I, *Woe is me!* for I am ⁵undone; because I *am* a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes

² Heb. *this cried to this.*—^d Rev. 4. 8.—³ Heb. *his glory is the fulness of the whole earth.*—^e Psalm 72. 19.—⁴ Heb. *thresholds.*—^f Exod. 40. 34; 1 Kings 8. 10.

wings were used as veils, the upper of the face and the lower of the lower parts of the body, extending to the feet. The face is veiled, as if to prevent the too full lustre of the divine radiance upon the eyes; the lower extremities from reverence and decency. The middle pair are for flying; but out of the divine presence, in performance of messages, doubtless the whole six are free to speed the lightning-like flight.

3. Cried unto another—If more than two, then they stood in opposite rows, each side the throne, and responded each singly to his opposite fellow, after the manner of an antiphonal service.

Holy—The threefold utterance might be supposed simply a repetition for emphasis, but the same threefoldness in Rev. iv, 8 (where see notes) plainly indicates the trinity.

4. Posts...moved...voice of him—As each cried "holy" singly, the prophet, standing in front of the vestibule, (not far from the great altar,) beheld a tremor of the "posts;" a trembling not caused by the physical force of the cry, but as a pulsation at the intensity of the divine holiness. **Filled with smoke**—The incense from the burning altar of verse 6, the symbol of worship of the present Jehovah, accompanying the ascription. See notes on Rev. viii, 2-5.

5. Woe is me—At sight of this display of divine holiness the prophet is dismayed. The fire of purity, he fears, will not cleanse, but consume him, conscious as he is of impurity. **A man of unclean lips**—And yet he had dared to prophesy in the name of

have seen the King, the Lord of hosts. **6** Then flew one of the seraphim unto me, ⁶having a live coal in his hand, *which* he had taken with the tongs from off ^athe altar: **7** And he ⁷¹laid *it* upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged.

8 Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who

^g Exod. 4. 10; 6. 30; Judg. 6. 22; 13. 22; Jer. 1. 6.—⁵ Heb. *cut off.*—⁶ Heb. *and in his hand a live coal.*—^h Rev. 8. 3.—⁷ Heb. *caused it to touch.*—ⁱ See Jer. 1. 9; Dan. 10. 16.

this thrice holy! **Midst of a people of unclean lips**—Impure, not only inwardly and individually, but by contagion from without. The filthy tongues of neighbours and countrymen have contaminated my ears, heart, and soul. The thought is not that I am by this uncleanness unfitted for joining the "holy, holy, holy," of the seraphim; but it is that I am unfit to speak as the mouth of Jehovah: for it is for this that the coal of the seraph purifies his lips; and this profound consecration for his office is key to this whole vision.

6. Flew—The seraph spread his middle pair of wings and "flew" from the throne, first to the altar of incense, then to the prophet with a glowing coal. This "coal" is originally taken from the atoning great altar before the temple door, and so Isaiah was pardoned through the atonement; it was taken by the angel from the holy altar of incense, and so, applied to the prophet's **mouth**, purified his lips for the coming terrible utterances they were to deliver.

7. Touched thy lips—Yet, though "mouth" alone was touched by the coal, the purifying power burned through the whole nature. The "lips" were touched because they were the organ through which the purified nature would express itself.

8. Voice of the Lord—The seraphs' voices are hushed at the "voice" of Jehovah. From amid the Presence a great inquiry reaches the prophet's ear. It is an inquiry which Jehovah is ever making; namely, for preachers and missionaries to a dying world.

will go for ^k us? Then said I, ^e Here am I; send me. **¶** And he said, Go, and tell this people, ¹ Hear ye ² indeed, but understand not; and see ye ¹⁰ indeed, but perceive not. **10** Make ^m the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; ^a lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their

^k Gen. 1, 26; 3, 22; 11, 7.—⁸ Heb. *Behold me.*—^l Chap. 43, 8; Matt. 13, 14; Mark 4, 12; Luke 8, 10; John 12, 40; Acts 28, 26; Rom. 11, 8. ⁹ Or, *without ceasing*, etc. Heb. *hear ye in hearing*, etc.

Whom shall I send, and who will go, are the divine queries. The first query implies that whoever goes should first receive his commission from Jehovah; he should be *sent*, and not go before he is *sent*. The second implies that he should freely **will to go**; he should heartily accord with his commission. **For us**—The plural may here, as elsewhere, be the plural of royalty, by which kings speak of themselves as *we* and *us*. Or, it may include with Jehovah himself his attendant court of seraphim. Or, as many eminent commentators, it may denote the trinity, indicated in the thrice “holy” uttered by the seraphim. **Here am I**—And this is the man who a few minutes ago was agonized with fear for his life because in his impurity he had seen God. Touched with the heavenly fire he now faces with bold joy the divine Presence, and announces himself ready for any message.

9. Hear ye . . . but understand not—Not a command, but a recognition in imperative form of what their hard predispositions indicated they would do: Hear and (as it is clear you purpose to do) refuse to appreciate the truth; shut it out from your cognizance; ignore it and persistently misunderstand it.

10. Make the heart . . . fat—The prophet Jeremiah (Jer. i, 10) was verbally directed to produce effects which he only predicted. Here Isaiah is directed to cause results which will doubtless take place, but are not necessary effects of his action. His prophecy is not responsible for results produced by the hardness of the people to whom it is delivered. **Lest**

heart, and convert, and be healed. **11** Then said I, Lord, how long? And he answered, ^o Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be ¹¹ utterly desolate, **12** ^p And the Lord have removed men far away, and *there be a great forsaking in the midst of the land.*

13 But yet in it *shall be a tenth*, ¹² and

¹⁰ Heb. *in seeing*.—^m Psa. 119, 70; chap. 63, 17.—ⁿ Jer. 5, 21.—^o Mic. 3, 12.—¹¹ Heb. *desolate with desolation*.—^p 2 Kings 25, 21.—¹² Or, *when it is returned, and hath been browsed*.

depends upon **heavy**. The heaviness or torpidity is vigilant “lest” conversion should follow the prophet’s gospel.

11. How long a period will this hardness last, and how extended a time must the message predict? **Until**—The direful answer covers the whole period until Nebuchadnezzar carries the people to Babylon. **Cities** will be reduced to solitudes; **houses** will stand tenantless and dilapidated; **land** or soil will be untilled and run wild.

12. Lord have removed—Accomplished the punishment of Judah through the agency of Babylon.

13. A tenth—A remnant of some one in ten shall be left in Judah by the captor. Thus, in 2 Kings xxv, 12, it is said “the captain of the guard left the poor of the land to be vine-dressers and husbandmen.” It was the great land monopolists that were taken from the land. So, 2 Kings xxiv, 14, it is said, “Nebuchadnezzar carried away all Jerusalem, and all the princes, and all the mighty men of valour, even ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and smiths; none remained save the poorer sort of the people of the land.” Over these he made Gedaliah king. 2 Kings xxiv, 22. **It shall return**—The prophecy omits to say that this “tenth” emigrated at first to Egypt, and that it was from Egypt that it returned. The omission is supplied by 2 Kings xxv, 26, where it is said that the remnant “arose and came to Egypt, for they were afraid of the Chaldees,” or Babylonians. They afterwards, however, returned to Judea, (Jer. xl, 11, 12,) and resumed residence under the rule of Gedaliah.

it shall return, and shall be eaten: as a teil tree, and as an oak, whose ¹³substance is in them, when they cast their leaves: so ^athe holy seed shall be the substance thereof.

13 Or, *stock, or, stem.*—*q* Ezra 9.2; Mal. 2.15;

Be eaten—Literally, *be grazed*, or consumed as grass is by grazing cattle. They would be worn out with poverty and hardship. **Teil tree**—The terebinth or turpentine tree. A large tree, less than the oak, with lancet-shaped leaves of a dark reddish hue, and a trunk producing a fine resin. It is not an evergreen. **Cast their leaves**—In autumn these noble deciduous trees shed their "leaves;" but their sap retires to the trunk, and the concentrated vitality will put on new glory in the spring. **So shall the holy seed**—the offspring of Abraham—be the stock **thereof**, that is, of the Hebrew race. The remnant, reinforced by the restoration from the captivity, will constitute a trunk surviving the downfall, as a tree survives its cast-off foliage. Wonderfully truly, from the prophet's time to the present hour, has this prophecy of the persistent vitality of the Jewish race been verified.]

PART II.

Afflictions from Assyrian oppressions are assuaged by consolations from Immanuel, chapters vii-xii.

CHAPTER VII.

THE DIVINE SIGN.

Apart from historical circumstances, the following prophecies cannot be understood.

1. **And it came to pass**—Isaiah's recorded prophecies under the reigns of Uzziah and Jotham have closed, and those under Ahaz here begin. Jotham and his father were good kings, and their reigns were the most prosperous in the annals of Judah. One element of idolatry, however, was not discouraged—the high places were not destroyed. (See note on chap. ii, 6; and for a full discussion on "High Places," see Smith's *Dict. of the Bible*.)

CHAPTER VII.

AND it came to pass in the days of ^aAhaz the son of Jotham, the son of Uzziah, king of Judah, *that* Rezin the king of Syria, and Pekah the son of

Rom. 11. 5.—*a* 2 Kings 16. 5; 2 Chron. 28. 5, 6.

This, of course, emboldened the people in some practices hostile to the religion of Jehovah, and the long term of national prosperity led to indulgence among the younger generation in many fascinating forms of idolatry. In consequence, Judah showed to the searching thought of the envious rulers of adjacent kingdoms such signs of national degeneracy and weakness as encouraged them to form schemes of aggression. But they delayed their assault till Jotham's death and the accession of his son—B. C. 742—when the first great attack was made, and the army of Ahaz was destroyed, and two hundred thousand captives, (see 2 Chron. xxviii, 5-15,) which, at the instance of a prophet at Samaria, Oded by name, were returned to Judah. It seems to be at a point of time between this great first success of the enemy and his final retreat that the narrative here begins, and the word "and" in the text connects the two events. **In the days of Ahaz**—The true age of Ahaz when he began to reign was probably twenty-five; (see Septuagint at 2 Chron. xxviii, 1;) otherwise he became the father of Hezekiah at ten years of age. Ahaz seems to have been trained (probably through maternal influence and direction) in an atmosphere of idolatry. He erected statues of Baal, and joined in the rites of Moloch, 2 Chron. xxviii, 1-5. His kingdom began early to suffer retribution. Patriotism wanes when God is dishonoured. So at this time. In the course of his reign trouble arose all around the horizon. Ammonites broke from their vassalage. Edomites, becoming free, assaulted the southern, and Philistines the western, borders. This state of things came from complications in the last of Jotham's reign. Egypt, in the southwest, and Assyria, in the northeast, were the great powers that alternately kept the interven-

Remaliah, king of Israel, went up toward Jerusalem to war against it, but could not prevail against it. **2** And it was told the house of David, saying, Syria¹ is confederate with Ephraim. And his heart was moved, and the heart of his

people, as the trees of the wood are moved with the wind. **3** Then said the LORD unto Isaiah, Go forth now to meet Ahaz, thou,² and ²Shear-jashub thy son, at the end of the^c conduit of the upper pool, in the³ highway of the fuller's field. **4** And

¹ Heb. *resteth on Ephraim*.—^b Chap. 10. 21.
—² That is, *The remnant shall return*. See

chap. 6. 13; 10. 21.—^c 2 Kings 18. 17; chap. 36. 2.—³ Or, *causeway*.

ing small kingdoms in a state of semi-subjection. They used these lesser kingdoms at convenience in their hostile operations on each other. At this time Assyria seems to be in the ascendant. Damascus chafes at being tributary to Assyria, and Rezin, her king, readily consents to confederate with Pekah, the usurper, king over Israel, (2 Kings xv, 25,) who wants to humble the hitherto prosperous Judah. Egypt favours any confederation that will protect her frontier against her formidable rival, Assyria.

This appears to be the situation in the last of Jotham's reign. The history in 2 Kings xv, 37—xvi, 9, is fragmentary, but it hints, and the Assyrian inscriptions confirm, that the leaguers Pekah and Rezin made an unsuccessful raid against Judah under Jotham, who unfortunately died while yet in his vigour, and left the wicked and weak Ahaz an easier prey to their designs. A second inroad was made on Judah with the results above mentioned, namely, an immense slaughter of troops and a great capture of women and children from among the villages. But Jerusalem was yet too well fortified to be taken. And this explains the last words of this verse, **could not prevail against it**. The geographical positions are thus: Syria, of which Damascus is the capital and Rezin the king, is northeast, and between Israel and Assyria; and Ephraim, or Israel, is north of Judah, and between that kingdom and that of Syria.

2. Told the house of David—This signal phrase refers not to the *court* of Ahaz, but to the blood royal, the lineage; as in modern phrase, "the house of Bourbon," "the house of Brunswick." So always, as 1 Kings xii, 19: "Israel rebelled against the house of David unto this day;" as also verses 16 and 26, same chapter. And

in Nathan's memorable message to David, (2 Sam. vii,) the king was told that as he had purposed to build Jehovah a "house," so Jehovah would build him "a house," that is, a royal lineage. "Thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee." Verse 16. And David replies, (verses 18, 25–27, and 29,) "Bless the house of thy servant that it may continue before thee for ever." And so Luke i. 27: "To a virgin... of the *house of David*." Illustrious was the pedigree of that *house*, as given by Luke, beginning with Adam and the fall, and reaching to the Messiah. And never yet, in Ahaz's time, had the line of David on the throne been broken. The royal line in the northern kingdom had been changed by a succession of usurpers, of whom this Pekah was then the last one. Doubtless the royal family of David realized their high descent, and were most deeply alarmed at the thought that its sacred continuity should be broken, and a usurper, the son of Tabeal, should break the promised line. **His heart**—David's "heart," ideally identified with David's "house;" and so **his people**, no other than David's.

3. Shear-jashub was to go with Isaiah because his name, signifying "a remnant shall return," like an inscription, was a memento of final salvation for Judah, and it was a message of encouragement for Ahaz that the prophet would bring. **Conduit of the upper pool**—"The upper pool" was a water reservoir for city use; and the "conduit" was the pipe or aqueduct by which the water was conveyed to the western side of the city. See notes on 1 Kings i, 33, and 2 Kings xviii, 17. (See opposite map.) **Highway of the fuller's field**—The "field" where, contiguous to the needed water, dyers spread

say unto him, Take heed, and be quiet; fear not, ⁴neither be fainthearted for the two tails of these smoking firebrands, for the fierce anger of Rezin with Syria, and of the son of Remaliah. **5** Because Syria, Ephraim, and the son of Remaliah, have taken evil counsel against thee, saying, **6** Let us go up against Judah, and vex it, and let us make a breach therein for us, and set a king in the midst of it, *even* the son of Tabeal:

⁴ Heb. *let not thy heart be tender.*—⁵ Or, *waken.*—^d Prov. 21. 30; ch. 8. 10.—^e 2 Sam. 8. 6.—⁶ Heb. *from a people.*

and bleached their cloths, and the "highway" leading to it from the city.

4. Fear not—Words calculated to soothe the perturbation of David's house and heart. Had there been faith there would also have been firmness. And the prophet's cheer for him was confirmed by a lofty contempt for the two invaders. They are but two **firebrands** already burnt out even to their **tails**; and they are no longer blazing or burning, but only **smoking**, almost to extinction. Their day is about closed. **Son of Remaliah**—Says Hengstenberg: "The Hebrews and Arabians, when they wish to speak reproachfully of any one, omit his proper name, and call him merely son of this or that, especially when his father is but little known or respected. So Saul names David, in contempt, son of Jesse. 1 Sam. xx, 27, 31." In this case the phrase was a reminder that Pekah was a usurper.

6. Make a breach—In the wall, by which the city of Jerusalem could be taken. **Son of Tabeal**—An individual otherwise unknown. Probably a foreign pretender, whom these invaders meant to enthrone, so as to overthrow "the house of David."

8, 9. In these verses there is at first sight a degree of complexity which has induced some able commentators to propose amendments of the text. But a closer investigation reveals the real parallelisms. In each verse there is an antecedent statement and a result, and the two statements correspond, and the two results correspond. In verse 8 the *statement* is, that the ally of Israel—Ephraim—is nothing

7 Thus saith the Lord God, ⁴It shall not stand, neither shall it come to pass. **8** ^eFor the head of Syria *is* Damascus, and the head of Damascus *is* Rezin; and within threescore and five years shall Ephraim be broken, ⁶that it be not a people. **9** And the head of Ephraim *is* Samaria, and the head of Samaria *is* Remaliah's son. ⁷If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established.

10 ⁸Moreover the LORD spake again

^f2 Chron. 20. 20.—⁷ Or, *Do ye not believe? it is because ye are not stable.*—⁸ Heb. *And the LORD added to speak.*

more than Syria, with its capital, Damascus, culminating like a pyramid in king Rezin; and the result is that Israel—Ephraim—in spite of the alliance, shall be broken up within sixty-five years. That is, the Assyrian kingdom does not amount to much, is a temporary combination, soon to vanish. In verse 9 the statement is that Ephraim, Samaria, and Pekah taper up into a similar and even smaller pyramid; but yet it is only by faith in Jehovah that the third pyramid, Judah, Jerusalem, and Ahaz, can maintain position.

10. Moreover . . . again—In addition to these encouragements is offered a **sign** to confirm them. The very offer of a "sign," and especially of a "sign" at Ahaz's choice, however extraordinary, implies his want of faith in the assurances. **The Lord**—That is, Jehovah God; for wherever the word LORD in capitals appears in the Old Testament, the Hebrew is generally Jehovah. And Jehovah was the proper name of the God of Judah, as Moloch was the proper name of the god of Ammon, perhaps, also, of Phœnicia or Tyre. The pagans believed in the reality of national gods, of different degrees of power, holding the most powerful nations to be made so by their gods being most powerful. The cause of Ahaz's undervaluing Isaiah's encouragements was, his being on this point a pagan. He had already "sacrificed unto the gods of Damascus, which smote him: and he said, Because the gods of the kings of Syria help them, *therefore* will I sacrifice to them, that they may help me." 2 Chron. xxviii, 23. But at this present moment he has his mind's eye upon still

unto Ahaz, saying, **11** "Ask thee a sign of the Lord thy God: ^aask it either in the depth, or in the height above. **12** But Ahaz said, I will not ask, neither will I tempt the Lord. **13** And

^c Judg. 6. 36; Matt. 12. 38. — ⁹ Or, *make thy pe-*

mightier deities, even the gods of Assyria. So that the issue now is between Jehovah and Assyria. Isaiah and orthodox Israel held that Jehovah was indeed their own national God; but that he was also God of the earth, sole and supreme, all other gods being fictitious, and their images and idols but fancy furniture, worthy to be burnt. **Spake**—Through the mouth of Isaiah.

11. Ask—The extraordinary option here offered to Ahaz indicates the nature of his scepticism. Any thing within the proper limits of a "sign" he may demand. And here a "sign" is nothing less than a miracle; an immediate supernatural performance, showing that divine power sustained the predictions uttered, and would sustain a firm faith in Jehovah against the most powerful nations. **Depth... height**—In the sky above or on the earth, or even under the earth below. It is evidently a visible and immediate phenomenon that is offered.

12. Neither will I tempt the Lord—Jehovah. A master-stroke of dissimulation. Ahaz makes skilful use of his Hebrew education by quoting a text in Dent. vi. 16. He does this perhaps as a parry against Isaiah, perhaps to suit the orthodox part of his audience. To tempt Jehovah is to put him to the test to see if he has power. And here Ahaz assumes to be more pious than Jehovah himself, who offered the test.

13. O house of David—Wearied, truly, with Ahaz's contemptuous trifling, the prophet turns from him personally, as if too far gone for further hope or notice, and addresses himself to the "house of David." See note on verse 2. The sign now to be given is not to be given to Ahaz individually, nor to him at all, except as he is part of the "house of David," the royal stock extending to the Messiah, the

he said, Hear ye now, O house of David; *Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will ye weary my God also?* **14** Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; ^b Behold, a virgin shall

tition deep. — ^h Matthew 1. 23; Luke 1. 31, 34.

Messianic kindred. And inferentially it is given for the consolation of all the faithful in Judah. **Weary men**—Poor mortals like Isaiah and his adherents. **My God also**—In verse 11 the prophet had explicitly, to Ahaz, styled Jehovah "*thy God*," as a reminder of his allegiance to him; he now, as it were, retracts, and styles him exclusively "*my God*."

14. The Lord himself—Ahaz has refused to choose, and Jehovah will now present a "sign" of his own choosing. It will not be for Ahaz alone, but for the "house of David" and all believers in Judah. It will not be present and visible to the bodily eye, but will be vividly present to the eye of faith. It is the permanent "sign" of all past prophecy, type, and sacrifice furnished to God's Israel—the MESSIAH. And the permanent consolation of that "sign" is, that the "house of David" is indestructible until that "sign" is verified. And so Simeon styles the Messiah, "A sign which shall be spoken against." Luke i. 34. To those who ask how the future Messiah could be a present sign of the failure of the invaders of Judah we answer, such a *sign* was offered to Ahaz and refused. This does not claim to be such a sign; but it presents the standing sign of Messianic salvation to the "house of David," brought out with a most resplendent clearness for the consolation of the faithful, and on it is based a prediction of the speedy overthrow of the enemy, the fulfilment of which will soon be another confirmation of a future Messianic salvation. Of that Messiah we have now these four predicates: that he is virgin-born, that he is incarnate, that his being born is now visionally present, and that his present advent is envisioned to form a measure and token of immediate salvation from these enemies of the theocracy.

conceive, and bear ¹a son, and ¹⁰shall

ⁱ Chapter 9. 6. — ¹⁰ Or, *thou, O virgin, shall call.* See Genesis 4. 1, 25; 16. 11;

[Our interpretation of this prophecy in Matt. i, 23 (where see notes) was written near two decades ago, and remains essentially unchanged. Rejecting all different or secondary applications we affirm it as designating the Messiah alone. **Behold**—Contemplate this sign with the eye of faith. **A virgin**—Here comes the first misfortune, the substitution by our translators of “a” for THE. The “virgin!” What THE “virgin?” The virgin well known and notable to the “house of David” as predicted in the Edenic promise (Gen. iii, 5) to the woman that “her seed,” and not the man’s, should bruise the serpent’s head; “her seed” solely, because clearly his father is to be divine. And secondly, Isaiah’s contemporary prophet, Micah, says of Bethlehem: “Out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting; therefore will he give them up, *until the time that she which travaileth hath brought forth.*” Micah v, 2, 3. This bearer brings forth a divine offspring, and consequently not begotten by man, but the son of the virgin mother. And so a virgin birth is supposed wherever a divine paternity is supposed, as in Psa. ii, 7; Isa. ix, 6. The Hebrew word for “virgin,” here, is not indeed the specific word for a virgin in that language. The word signifies a girl of marriageable age, but unmarried. It sustains about the same relation as our word maiden does to “virgin.” But that a chaste and unmarried maiden is meant is plain from the fact that it is of this maiden that the conceiving and bringing forth are predicated. The prophet need not emphasize the virginity of the maiden mother of a divine Son. It is not a married woman once a maiden, but the unmarried maiden, that conceives. To have predicated the conceiving of a maiden, and yet omit the fact that she would be mar-

ried before conceiving, would convey an offensive implication. The fact that the Septuagint translators rendered the word ἡ παρθένος, *the virgin*, indicates that they knew that while the Hebrew word was not precisely “virgin,” yet what the prophet meant was “virgin,” and clearly evinces that what virgin was meant was matter of public notoriety. **Shall conceive, and bear**—Here is the second misfortune, that the present is rendered in the future, the real rendering being, *a virgin conceives and bears a son.* And that the prophet consciously meant a present tense is clear from the fact that the next verb is truly future: **shall call.** The virgin now *bears*, afterward she *will call* his name. That is, the conceiving and bearing are ideally present; so present that the child’s birth and growth are easy measure of fulfilling of passing events. So the similar prophecy, in chap. ix, 6, may be brought into parallel:

29, 32; 30. 6, 8; 1 Samuel 4. 21.—^k Chapter 8. 8.

The virgin con-
ceives and bears a
son—And shall
call his name IM-
MANUEL.

Unto us a Child
is born, unto us a
Son is given...
shall be called...
The mighty God.

Here are presented in both passages the virgin maternity, the present being born, the incarnate offspring. **Shall call his name Immanuel**—*God with us.* That this expresses a true incarnation is evident from the virgin birth. For reciprocally as the birth of a divine Son implies, as above shown, a virgin mother, so a virgin mother implies and is, for the very purpose of an incarnation—a God-man. To those who accept Matthew as a conclusive interpreter, this meaning is of course decided. Those who think that Matthew simply reads into the words a desired meaning, may be reminded that the parallel passage (chap. ix, 6) styles him “the mighty God.” The two passages read to-

and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good. **16** 'For before the child shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good, the land that thou

abhorrest shall be forsaken of ^mboth her kings.

17 ⁿ The Lord shall bring upon thee, and upon thy people, and upon thy father's house, days that have not come,

^l See chapter 8. 4.

^m 2 Kings 15. 30; 16. 9.—ⁿ 2 Chron. 28. 19.

gether are an unanswerable proof of a described incarnation. It confirms all this reasoning that, in viii, 8, Judah is called, "Thy land, O Immanuel," as if he were even now its divine proprietor, by whom it is prevented from being completely deluged by its foes.

15. Butter and honey shall he eat—The "butter" of the Old Testament was simply curdled milk. As Palestine was an easy region for cattle breeding, and wild bees were abundant and productive, so it was called "a land flowing with milk and honey." These were the most easily procured foods for the common people, and the usual food for children. Hence it is but the ordinary children's diet that is here specified for the child. Were it not that the amiable commentator, Albert Barnes, is so unwontedly severe upon the interpretation, we should not hesitate to say that the true meaning is, that the divine child would, though the divine Incarnate, eat the ordinary human food; so the resurrect Jesus ate before his disciples of their food to identify himself. How knew Isaiah's contemporaries that the born Immanuel would eat, not of celestial food, but the plain diet of other children? And it is interesting to be told by Luke that "he increased in wisdom" just like any other child. Luke ii, 52. **That he may know**—This word "that," in the sense of *in order that*, greatly distresses some commentators. What, did he eat butter and honey *in order* to know, etc.? And so they substitute *until* for "that." Now, we take it that the plain meaning is, that he ate the ordinary child's food in order that he might as a child grow in mind and body into years of discretion. Brain as well as muscle grows on food; and even the Incarnate submitted to the process.

16. Before the child—The Incarnate ideally present. In briefer time than his growth requires. **Land that thou abhorrest**—The combined territory of both Israel and Syria. Both are spoken of as one "land" because they were one against Judah. **Both her kings**—Rezin, king of Syria, was slain by the king of Assyria about one year after the date of this prophecy. Pekah, king of Israel, was slain by Hoshea, who usurped the kingdom perhaps two years after this utterance. The immediate fulfilment of these predictions was cheering voucher for the fulfilment of Isaiah's prediction of the future Incarnate. In the *thou* of this verse, Isaiah has already slightly recommenced address to Ahaz on this message of mercy; he will now pour forth upon a message of woe—woe to come from the very power on which he was relying, the king of Assyria.

17. The Lord shall bring upon thee—That is, upon the population of Judah. **And upon thy father's house**—The royal family. **Days... not come**—Afflictions, the like of which have never yet come. **From the day... Ephraim**—Since the ten tribes of Israel, under Jeroboam, revolted. See 1 Kings xii, 16. After Tiglath-pileser, the king of Assyria—probably within two years from the time his aid was sought by Ahaz—had overthrown Rezin and Pekah in their second attempt upon Judah and Jerusalem, he turned to subdue some small kingdoms in the north, but came again to harass Egypt on the south, and made Judah subject to a worse vassalage than before, causing the whole country to become the battle-field of Assyria and Egypt. For some time agriculture was ruined. A pasturage of shrubs, thorns, and briars covered nearly the whole territory of

from the day that °Ephraim departed from Judah; *even* the king of Assyria. **18** And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* the LORD °shall hiss for the fly that *is* in the uttermost part of the rivers of Egypt, and for the bee that *is* in the land of Assyria. **19** And they shall come, and shall rest all of them in

o 1 Kings 12. 16.—p Chap. 5. 26.—q Chap. 2. 19; Jer. 16. 16.—11 Or, *commendable trees*.

Judah. Then, as against Assyria, Judah, in process of time, seeks relief from Egypt, which in turn also becomes a fatal ally. During many years afterward deterioration went on, until all things became true which Isaiah had predicted. Finally, Israel first, then Judah, was desolated of people, nationality, and government altogether. The Assyrian annals give us two kings by the name of Tiglath-pileser. The one mentioned in transactions here was the second. He invaded Israel twice; the second invasion is the one here given. See Rawlinson's *Herodotus*, vol. i, p. 377.

18. It is not necessary to suppose that the piece of prophecy commencing here was delivered at the same time with the preceding, but it is on the same subject and in a similar strain. It is the more complete unfolding of the previously predicted calamities. That is, herein is explained what is said in verse 15. God himself is represented as entering into the action. **In that day**—In the days just threatened. **Shall hiss**—Chap. v, 26. The word signifies a kind of whistling. **For (or to) the fly**—See note on chap. v, 26. **Uttermost part of the rivers**—The Nile branches and canals in the Delta. Pharaoh Necho, king of Egypt, it is supposed, mustered armies, mentioned here tropically by *flies*. The fly is an abundant nuisance in Egypt. Any traveller in Egypt, at this time, even in the winter season, may observe the fly carrying the ophthalmic virus from the eyes of one to another, among the children especially of the *fellahs*; and scarcely half the population are unaffected by the ophthalmic scourge. **The bee... of Assyria**—The bee, be-

the desolate valleys, and in °the holes of the rocks, and upon all °bushes. **20** In the same day shall the Lord shave with a °razor that is hired, *namely*, by them beyond the river, by the king of Assyria, °the head, and the hair of the feet: and it shall also consume the beard. **21** And it

r 2 Kings 16. 7, 8; 2 Chron. 28. 20, 21; Ezekiel 5. 1.—s Chap. 1. 5; 9. 14, 17; 24. 2.

cause of its number in Assyria, or because of the keenness of its sting, is here taken as the symbol of the Assyrian armies. The scope of time covered by the fulfilment of verse 18 is from Isaiah's day to the end of Israel and Judah as nations: and the armies were headed by Pharaoh Necho of Egypt, and by Shalmanezzer, Esarhad-don, and Nebuchadnezzar of Assyria and Babylon.

19. They shall come—The armies "shall come." **And shall rest all of them**—They will settle down like bees in one part and like flies in another, in precipitous valleys, clefts of rocks, and in all thorn-hedges and pastures. A frightful figure of the different invasions of the armies of the two great countries, Assyria and Egypt. The great highway of these invaders of each other lay on the plain between the Mediterranean sea and the eastern foothills; but all the hill region also is here represented as covered, first by one army then by the other, but chiefly by the Assyrian and finally by the Babylonian armies.

20. Razor—The Assyrians are intended; the hired "razor" of Alaz. Not so much the products of Palestine are said to be touched, for there *locusts* would be apt to be the figure employed. The "razor" cuts down princes, and clips the beard, or exacts a heavy, disgraceful tribute. **Beyond the river**—The Euphrates. More is said in Scripture of indignities from those "beyond the river" than from those along the Nile. Orientals feel disgraced to the last degree when the beard is touched, pulled, or cut.

21, 22. From such spoliations, as well as removals of the population, agriculture ceases, and the land goes

shall come to pass in that day, *that* a man shall nourish a young cow and two sheep; **22** And it shall come to pass, for the abundance of milk *that* they shall give, he shall eat butter: for butter and honey shall every one eat that is left ¹² in the land. **23** And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* every place shall be, where there were a thousand vines at a thousand silverlings, 'it shall *even* be for briers and thorns. **24** With arrows and with bows shall

men come thither; because all the land shall become briers and thorns. **25** And *on* all hills that shall be digged with the mattock, there shall not come thither the fear of briers and thorns: but it shall be for the sending forth of oxen, and for the treading of lesser cattle.

CHAPTER VIII.

MOREOVER the LORD said unto me, Take thee a great roll, and ^a write

12 Heb. *in the midst of the land*.—*t* Chap.

5. 6.—*a* Chapter 30. 8; Habakkuk 2. 2.

to rough pasturage. When cultivation in that land is neglected, the tendency is to briers and thorns and thistles. Tristram (*Nat. Hist. Bible*, p. 423) says, "The combined heat and dryness of the climate seem to develop a tendency to form thorns even in groups where we should least expect them." **Shall nourish a young cow and two sheep**—The idea is, amid great straits from invaders, a man shall do well if he shall be able to save alive this amount of stock. So the word "nourish" indicates that pasturage is abundant, and this shall secure milk, curds, etc., enough. One may preserve himself well if he may but save his stock. If these are taken from him, his peril is certain, because of the fewness of the people, and the neglect of tillage of the soil.

23. Where there were, etc.—Where there were abundant and flourishing vineyards, and one vineyard had a **thousand vines**, worth each a *silverling*, or silver shekel, (about fifty-five or sixty cents.) Vineyards were estimated by the number of the vines and the quality of wine they produced. All these vineyards shall be overrun with briers, etc.—a wild waste for the fierce animals. And because of this fact hunters shall flock here with their weapons; or, perhaps the better meaning is, that men—the few men that are left—cannot go out into the fields in safety without their bows and arrows. Verse 25 adds the hilltops, hitherto fully cultivated with the hoe, (inaccessible to the plough,) as also to be neglected and going to briers and thorns in the coming time of depopulation, and only cattle shall

venture upon them in search of pasturage; and **lesser cattle**, that is, sheep and goats, shall join them.

The threat to Ahaz is ideally fulfilled. The desolation, when it comes, shall be wrought in a short time; in just as short a time as the striking down of Rezin and Pekah is to be done—a time measured by the morally unconscious years of the typical child-life in verses 15 and 16; a picture, too, in anticipation of the poverty-struck condition as to means of subsistence, in that coming awful final time of Jewish nationality, A. D. 70.

CHAPTER VIII.

CONSOLATIONS OF IMMANUEL, chap. viii, 1-ix, 6.

The prediction of the overthrow of Syria and Ephraim is repeated soon after the previous prophecy, (probably in the second year of Ahaz,) in the form of another symbolical name—namely, of a child to be born of the prophet's wife—to be inscribed on a tablet in the presence of two witnesses, with their indisputable attestation; witnesses, too, leaning to the king's side; and the stage of the infant growth is to be made the measure of the time of the event, as in chapter vii, 1-4. The fulfilment of the prediction by the early birth of the child would be type and confirmation of the far-distant fulfilment by the birth of Immanuel.

The Roll, 1-4.

1. Take thee a great roll—This was a wooden or metallic tablet, probably covered with a surface of wax for writing on with a stylus; large, so as to

in it with a man's pen concerning ¹ Maher-shalal-hash-baz. **2** And I took unto me faithful witnesses to record, ² Uriah the priest, and Zechariah the son of Jeberechiah. **3** And I ² went unto the prophetess; and she conceived, and bare a son. Then said the LORD to me, Call his name Maher-shalal-hash-baz. **4** ^c For before the child shall have knowledge to

¹ Heb. *In making speed to the spoil he hasteneth the prey, or, Make speed, etc.*—^b 2 Kings 16, 10.—² Heb. *approached unto.*—^c See chap. 7, 16.

be easily read by the public when put up as an inscription. See note on Luke i, 63. **Write...with a man's pen**—In the regular letters of a human alphabet, so as to be readily read and understood by men. See note on Rev. xiii, 18. **Concerning**—That is, it relates to, or, it is in these words. **Maher-shalal-hash-baz**—Which, translated, means, *Hastens booty, prey hastens.* The spoils of war are at hand. Capture and pillage are close upon the assailed.

2. Uriah the priest—The same that was sent for to Damascus by Ahaz to take a complete pattern of a heathen altar which the king desired to be erected in the temple at Jerusalem. 2 Kings xvi, 10. He was a bad man; a willing accomplice of Ahaz to introduce a corrupt religion into Jerusalem. Who **Zechariah** was is not so clear; possibly he was a Levite mentioned in 2 Chron. xxix, 13. Both were of the king's party, as against the reform party of Isaiah; so that it could not be pretended that it was a prediction forged after the event.

3. Then said the Lord—The prophetic inscription is fulfilled so far by the child's birth; and Jehovah requires his symbolic name to be conferred, like a prophetic inscription, on the child.

4. Before this it was known the inscription meant "plunder and spoils," but which the plundered party was to be was not known. **Shall have knowledge to cry**—Shall know how to speak the name **My father**. The date of the prophecy's fulfilment is determined by the infant's growth, about two years from its birth. And now who the vanquished party are be-

cry, My father, and my mother, ³ ^d the riches of Damascus and the spoil of Samaria shall be taken away before the king of Assyria.

5 The LORD spake also unto me again, saying, **6** Forasmuch as this people refuseth the waters of ^e Shiloah that go softly, and rejoice ^f in Rezin and Remaliah's son; **7** Now therefore, behold,

³ Or, he that is before the king of Assyria shall take away the riches, etc.—^d 2 Kings 15, 29; 16, 9; chap. 17, 3.—^e Neh. 8, 15; John 9, 7.—^f Chap. 7, 1, 2, 6.

comes known. The Assyrian power, hired by Ahaz, will pillage **Damascus**, and spoil **Samaria** before the boy-child shall know how to lisp "My father," etc.

Denunciation of the foreign parties in Judah, and assertion for Jehovah and his adherents, 5-22.

The prophet denounces the despisers of Siloah, the emblem of the mild Davidic kingdom, and threatens that they shall be overwhelmed with the Euphrates, the emblem of the terrible Assyrian empire, 5-8. He bids the enemies of Jehovah defiance, 8-10; calls upon the people to reject their clamors, and to turn to the law and to the Jehovistic signs presented in himself and family, 11-18. He denounces the deserters from God's law who resort to sorcerers for guidance.

6. Forasmuch as this people—Israel is especially meant, though Judah, in a general sense, is included. **Refuseth the waters of Shiloah**—The "waters of *Shiloah*," or Siloah, are doubtless the same which are better known under their later name of Siloam, (see note and cut, John ix, 7,) the only perennial spring in Jerusalem, supplying the pool of that name at the foot of the hill Ophel in the southeast part of the city. (See Thomson's "Land and Book," vol. ii.) **Softly**—Its waters gently flowing, typical of the true Davidic sovereignty, as the mighty Euphrates here symbolizes the distant Assyrian monarchy proudly crowning its banks. (See map.) So in the Apocalypse the Euphrates symbolizes the world-power Babylon. Rev. ix, 14; xvi, 12.

7. Therefore—As a direct conse-

the Lord bringeth up upon them the waters of the river, strong and many, *even* ^athe king of Assyria, and all his glory: and he shall come up over all his channels, and go over all his banks: 8 And he shall pass through Judah; he shall overflow and go over, ^bhe shall reach *even* to the neck; and ^cthe stretching out of his wings shall fill the breadth of thy land, O Immanuel.

9 ^kAssociate yourselves, O ye people,

^g Chap. 10. 12.—^h Chap. 30. 28.—⁴ Heb. *the fulness of the breadth of thy land shall be the stretching out of his wings.*—ⁱ Chap. 7. 14.

quence. **The Lord bringeth up upon them**—By his willing permission they come, because all else has failed to correct and reform. **Waters of . . . river**—Literally, the Euphrates; figuratively, the multitude of the invading army. **Strong and many**—Expressive both of power and number. The Lord is about to permit the great nation to overrun Syria and Israel, and Judah, too, in good time.

8. **He shall pass through Judah**

—This calamity shall come when the Assyrian shall be on his way to conquer Egypt. Israel and Syria fallen, Judah will secretly seek protection from Egypt. In punishment for this, on discovery or even suspicion of treachery, **he shall overflow and go over**. The mixed metaphor of the river (verse 7) is used, denoting Assyria's great marching army as sweeping the hills of Judah and moving on Jerusalem. **Even to the neck**—Perhaps an intimation that though the Israelites would be greatly oppressed the kingdom would not at this time be wholly subverted. **Stretching out of his wings**—His army wings, right and left.

Thy land, O Immanuel—The land of Judah, quite submerged, quite covered with soldiery, but not destroyed, because it belongs to "Immanuel." "This passage supplies a point of connexion between chap. vii. 14, and ix. 1. Isaiah recollects the promise of the wonderful child, and seems to feel that it is not exhausted by the overthrow of the Syrians and Ephraimites: he already sees dimly the triumph of the Messiah over Assyria. This seems to be involved in verse 8, and the challenge of verses

^aand ye shall be broken in pieces; and give ear, all ye of far countries: gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces; gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces. 10 ¹Take counsel together, and it shall come to nought; speak the word, ^mand it shall not stand: ⁿfor God is with us.

11 For the Lord spake thus to me ^awith a strong hand, and instructed me that I should not walk in the way of this

^k Joel 3. 9, 11.—⁵ Or. *yet*—^l Job 5. 12.—^m Chap. 7. 1.—ⁿ Chap. 7. 14; Acts 5. 38, 39; Rom. 8. 31.—⁶ Heb. *in strength of hand.*

9, 10, both of which are founded upon the word, "God with us."—*Cheyne.*

9, 10. In full prophetic knowledge of how the results will be, the prophet, with impetuous transition, defies the foreign partisans. **Associate yourselves**, etc.—Rather, (Heb.,) *Rage ye*. That is, do your utmost, it will end only in your tearing yourselves to pieces; all ye world-kings far away, look on and see the ever-doubtful odds of contest ye undertake with Jehovah. These seem all but ironical commands, like chap. vi. 9, 10. They imply that though those world-kings may have partial and temporary successes over Judah, their utter overthrow of its holy remnant is an impossible thing. **Take counsel together**—Devise whatever plans ye may on this head of destroying God's people; it shall be entirely vain. **Speak the word**—Give forth your order; it cannot be carried into execution, **for God is with us**. It is Immanuel's land. To Isaiah's vision the antitypical Immanuel was already born. All the banded nations of the world could not dispossess Immanuel of his own possessions. Psalm ii. In the next verse Isaiah gives the reason why.

11. **The Lord spake thus to me with a strong hand**—With strength of hand, that is, with mighty inspiring power. Passages in Ezekiel i. 3; iii. 14, 22; xi. 5; xxxiii. 32; xxxvii. 1, offer the same or similar usage of the word "hand."—"hand of God upon," etc.,—and justify this interpretation. God imparted to Isaiah on the matters stated above, an especially strong prophetic impulse. **And instructed me**—Warned me against walking in

people, saying, **12** Say ye not, A confederacy, to all *them* to whom ^a this people shall say, A confederacy; ^p neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid. **13** ^a Sanctify the LORD of hosts himself; and ^r let him be your fear, and let him be your dread. **14** And ^s he shall

be for a sanctuary; but for ^a a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. **15** And many among them shall ^a stumble, and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken. **16** Bind up

^o Ch. 7. 2.—^p 1 Pet. 3. 14, 15.—^q Num. 20. 12.—^r Ps. 76. 7; Luke 12. 5.—^s Ezek. 11. 16.

^t Ch. 28. 16; Luke 2. 34; Rom. 9. 33; 1 Pet. 2. 8.—^u Matt. 21. 44; Luke 20. 18; Rom. 9. 32; 11. 25.

the way of this people in their distrust of Jehovah, in their inclination to the court policy and to popular factions, or clamouring for foreign human aid. And for persuading this people to trust in Jehovah only, and to sever themselves from those rejecting Jehovah, a cry was probably raised against the prophet and his adherents. In this crisis, imparting a mighty influence to Isaiah, *Jehovah spake thus*, that is, what follows in the next verse.

12. Say ye not—Rather, *Ye shall not say*, a prohibition. **A confederacy**—

כִּשְׁתָּר, (*kesher*;) “conspiracy.” In other

places, (2 Sam. xv, 12; 1 Kings xvi, 10; 2 Kings xi, 14, etc.) this word means *treason*. Most commentators, since Jerome, do not apply this to the arts of Pekah and Rezin, for theirs was a real conspiracy against Judah. Jehovah could not refer to this, but to the charge of disloyalty to the king, Ahaz, upon Isaiah and his friends. This charge they were to disregard utterly, and go on in the performance of duty boldly. **To all them to whom**—Rather, concerning every thing of which this people shout, “*Treason!*” **Neither fear ye their fear**—Or, that which they fear. The fear that ruin will follow if Judah rejects foreign alliance and trusts in Jehovah alone.

13. Sanctify, etc.—Regard Jehovah as immutably true. **Let him be your fear**—Literally, *He is your fear and your dread*; one whom alone you have true occasion to fear as your sovereign, and love as your protector.

14, 15. He shall be for a sanctuary—The context and its scope require this word to mean here, *refuge*, *place of safety*—a figure for the MESSIAH himself. **Stone of stumbling**—A stone against which one dangerously strikes; over which, too, it is

perilous for one to fall. Similar is the meaning of the next phrase. **A gin**—The figure is changed—a *trap*—to express another side to the peril of Israel and Judah in neglecting to make Jehovah their absolute trust. **Many among them**—Many, by the invasion which the Assyrian shall make. The repetition, here, of figures synonymous as to meaning is to be regarded as a strong poetic emphasis, and by such emphasis certainty of peril to unbelieving Israel and Judah is intended.

16. Bind (thou) up—The Septuagint and the Targum, and the greater majority of commentators, regard this verse as God's command to the prophet, and verse 17 as the prophet's answer. The reason for the command is, that warnings to the ungodly factions and the duty of Jehovah's adherents have been sufficiently presented; the divine voice, inwardly heard by the prophet, now urges to close this strain, and to seal up the roll containing the preceding truths—the **testimony**—which the mass of the people, in their blindness, do not apprehend, and, in their self-hardening, despise. See note at chap. vi, 9, 10. It is as if God was now saying to Isaiah, “The prophecy is complete; close it up.” **Seal the law**—The mode of sealing rolls was, by uniting the end to the body of the roll by adhesive paste or glue, then tying the volume with a cord. Dan. viii, 26; xii, 4. “The law” is the inspired communication within the roll. **Among my disciples**—The roll thus bound was to be kept with the adherents of Jehovah and the prophet, who were composed of the few believing people, and the members of the prophetic school at Jerusalem, of which, no doubt, Isaiah was the head. These were witnesses, like those in verses 1-4.

the testimony, seal the law among my disciples. **17** And I will wait upon the Lord, that ^vhideth his face from the house of Jacob, and I ^wwill look for him. **18** ^xBehold, I and the children whom the Lord hath given me ^yare for signs and for

wonders in Israel from the Lord of hosts, which dwelleth in ~~mount~~ Zion.

19 And when they shall say unto you, ^zSeek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards ^athat peep and that mutter: should not a people

^v Chap. 54, 8.—^w IIab. 2, 3; Luke 2, 25, 38.
^z Heb. 2, 13.

^y Psalm 71, 7; Zech. 3, 8.—^z 1 Samuel 28, 8; chap. 19, 3.—^a Chap. 29, 4.

17. And I—The person "I" is Isaiah, (not *Messiah*, as Henderson, Alexander, Cowles, etc.) The prophet, at least, **will wait upon the Lord**; that is, he who had been seized by "the strong hand," (verse 11,) the mighty inspiring power of Jehovah, and whose will and thought are in complete union with him, "will wait upon" **...and...look for him**. Such a one surely *is* prepared to trust God absolutely, and to inspire such trust in others who are but faintly cleaving to Jehovah. **That hideth his face**—As God had said he should, in case of their rebelling. Deut. xxxi, 17, 18; xxxii, 20. **From the house of Jacob**—From all his descendants, the houses of Judah and Israel.

18. The prophet points to himself and family as signs of the rightfulness of relying on Jehovah rather than looking to Assyria. The import of the name Isaiah is, *Salvation of the Lord*; and thus in his name the prophet becomes a type of Christ, and this accounts for Hebrews ii, 13, where there is a blending of type and antitype, as the abstract meaning of both is the same. **Behold**—A call to a momentous wonder. **I and the children**—As expressed in their several names, (chap. vii, 3; viii, 3, 4;) signs predicting certain deliverance, already coming, and sure to continue to the last. These facts were wonders, and challenged the gravest attention and examination of Judah. **Whom the Lord hath given me**—The Psalmist, the Evangelist John, and the Apostle Paul interpret this passage of the Christ and his spiritual progeny. **Dwelleth in...Zion**—Instead of Assyria's gods, that dwelt in Nineveh. Isaiah's exalted virtue, profound sincerity, and remarkable genius must have commanded respect and secretly exercised great restraining

power. Ewald (in *History of Israel*), vol. iv, p. 174,) says, "He was an absolutely immovable refuge in the tempest." And again, (p. 202,) "At this crisis the eternal and glorified expectation of the kingdom of God was... placed in antagonism to all heathen dominion by violence, and nothing is more marvellous than the undaunted attitude of Isaiah in encountering the fury of the dreaded king [of Assyria] with the calmness of this blessed hope."

"No adequate explanation of this wonder," says Kay, "can be given except that which Isaiah himself assigns. It was the result of an express communication to him of a *divine word*, accompanied by a *divine action upon his spirit*."

19. Distrusting Jehovah, and afraid of Assyria, some of the people were resorting to sorcerers for counsel. The blended folly and impiety of this our prophet now exposes. **Familiar spirits**—These were necromancers, conjurers, supposed to be able to call up the dead, who could give information of the future world or future events. *Obhath* is the plural of a word meaning hollow, and in its secondary or concrete tropical sense it means the conjurers themselves evoking, as with ventriloquising voice, spirits from the regions of the dead. Deut. xviii, 11; 1 Sam. xxviii, 8, etc. **Wizards**—Knowing ones, or sorcerers, magicians, adduced along with *obhath*, and spoken of lying prophets, Lev. xix, 31; Deut. xviii, 11. **That peep...mutter**—In the original, *chirp, whisper*, tricks of ventriloquism, no doubt. **Should not a people seek unto their God**—This is the reply which the believers in Jehovah, who "wait upon him" and "look for him" in times of peril, are instructed to give to the half-idolatrous ones tempt-

seek unto their God? for the living ^{to} the dead? **20** ^{to} To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, *it is because* ^{there is} no light in them. **21** And they shall pass through it, hardly bestead and hungry: and it shall come to pass, that when they shall be hungry they shall fret themselves, and ^{curse} their king and their God, and look upward. **22** And ^{they} they

shall look unto the earth; and behold trouble and darkness, ^{dimness of} anguish; and *they shall be driven to darkness.*

CHAPTER IX.

NEVERTHELESS ^{the dimness} shall not be such as *was* in her vexation, when at the ^{first} he lightly afflicted the land of Zebulun, and the

^b Psa. 106. 28. — ^c Luke 16. 29. — ^d Mic. 3. 6.
— ⁷ Heb. *no morning.* — ^e Rev. 16. 11.

^f Chap. 5. 30. — ^g Chap. 9. 1. — ^a Chap. 8. 22.
— ^b 2 Kings 15. 29; 2 Chron. 16. 4.

ing them to consult necromancers and the like. The prophet says to his adherents: "When they call you off to such responses by means of their miserable tricks of spiritism, [for this is not a modern invention,] should you not seek answers from your own living, almighty Jehovah?" **For the living to the dead**—A continued expression of the prophet's astonishment. "Go to the dead to inquire in behalf of the living!" The meaning turns on the preposition בְּעַד, (*b'ead*), *in-*

stead of, or better, *in behalf of*. The best critics adopt the latter; so, literally, the phrase is, *In behalf of the living to the dead!*

20. Instead of resorting to such forbidden and abominable sources, **to the law and to the testimony** resort ye, continues the prophet. **If they speak not according to this word**—If they, if any one. **This word**—The law of Moses, and the testimony of Jehovah's true prophets. Whatever lines of action deviated from these prescriptions are to be avoided as leading to ways prescribed by counsels of darkness. **Because there is no light in them**—Or, *surely no morning dawn is in them*. No dawning hope of salvation for the land against her confederate enemies can spring from sorcery. It must come from Jehovah's law and testimony alone.

21. They shall pass through it—"They"—the king, the court, and their supporters among the people, who have gone to necromancers for light. **Hardly bestead**—In great straits, disappointed, oppressed with anxiety. **Hungry**—As the effect of calamity from not looking to God,

"to the law and to the testimony." A moral famine befalls them, more grievous than the temporary one in Ahaz's time. **Look upward**—Seeing no light they look to heaven in vain. They despised the true God, and he is shut off from their view.

22. Then from looking upward they look to **earth** again; to enchantments and sorcery they look, only to feel woes more bitter, and to see forever no dawn, no *dawn*. **Trouble...darkness...dimness...anguish**—Accumulated images. Each one, as it rapidly flits before Isaiah, deepens the horror of gathering gloom and darkness. So fearful are God's moral judgments on men when they to the last refuse to look to him for aid and guidance.

CHAPTER IX.

1. Nevertheless—A transition word from the dark picture of chap. viii, 5-22, describing the woes from Assyrian predominance to the bright dawn and consummation of the Messianic era. **The dimness shall not be such as was in her vexation**—It shall not always continue dark where there is now distress. **When at the first**—Literally, *as the former time*, namely, the time of the invasion by Assyria, under Tiglath-pileser, which had already taken place as described in 2 Kings xv, 29, where we are told that he took "Ijon...and Gilead, and Galilee, all the land of Naphtali, and carried them captive to Assyria." Great contrast between Tiglath-pileser and the Messiah. See note on Matt. iv, 15. **He lightly afflicted**—Rather, he brought contempt upon those regions, **Zebulun and Naphtali**. These sections were in the path-

land of Naphtali, and ^c afterward did more grievously afflict *her* by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, in Galilee^d of the nations. **2** ^a The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light

^c Lev. 26, 24; 2 Kings 17, 5, 6; 1 Chr. 5, 26.—¹ Or, *populous*.—^d Matt. 4, 16; Eph. 5, 8, 14.

way of all invasions, Syrian and Assyrian, and so suffered extremely. **Afterward**—That is, in the later times. **Did more grievously afflict**—The verb in Hebrew may mean this or the reverse, as *brought*, or *brings honour upon*; and the apodosis of the sentence certainly requires the latter. As the former time brought distress, so the later brings glory. **The way of the sea**—The sea of Galilee, upon the north of which Zebulun and Naphtali abut. **Beyond Jordan**—And upon the other side of Jordan, also formerly distressed and depopulated. **Galilee of the nations**—The *circuit of the Gentiles*, is better. The description here is of the northern parts of Israel bordering on the little sea; which country, after its depopulation by Tiglath-pileser, was colonized by foreigners, forming ever after a mixed people, partly Israelitish, partly heathen, despised by the purer Jews in Judah, but more ready, though imbued more or less with the heathenish spirit, to receive the Messiah when he should come. And this is the honour brought upon them in the aftertime. This mixed people received, for the most part, the Jewish religion; yet during all the ages they were more liberal in thought and more free from bigotry than were the southern Jews.

2. The people that walked in darkness—The “darkness” of mingled Judaism and paganism. **Upon them hath the light shined**—The light, namely, of Messiah’s own presence and preaching.

3. Hast multiplied the nation—What nation? The true spiritual Israel—all adherents to Messiah—who come in place of the old Israel, undoubtedly come now into the prophet’s foreground. **And not**—Better,

shined. **3** Thou hast multiplied the nation, *and*² not increased the joy: they joy before thee according to the joy in harvest, *and* as men rejoice^c when they divide the spoil. **4** ³ For thou hast broken the yoke of his burden, and¹ the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his op-

² Or, *to him*.—^e Judg. 5, 30.—³ Or, *When thou breakest*.—^f Chap. 10, 5; 14, 5.

to him, as marginal reading. For the true Israel **thou hast . . . increased . . . joy**—This spiritual joy is compared with **joy in harvest**. The Hebrew word for “joy” is in the construct state. “Joy of”——, and the ellipsis is thus filled: “*Joy of the people*,” etc. See Gesenius’s *Grammar*, § 116. Hilarious joy is still a common usage in Palestinian festive seasons after harvest and after vintage; and spiritual joy in the text is, in its outward manner—not in its quality or kind—compared with this; also with the joy which occurred in old time in the division of spoils of war after great victories.

4. Thou hast broken—In speaking of Messianic times the prophet sees things prospective as though past; but facts of those times he sees in a group, and all in the present tense, as in verse six. **Yoke of his burden**—“His” refers to Judah. From the Assyrian tributary burden upon him, the thought here rises to the complete unburdening of the future true Israel. **Staff**—Or, stick, for the yoke Oriental is merely such—a pole across the neck of oxen. **Rod**—The symbol of the oppressor’s power, as the ox-goad (as the word may be interpreted) is the implement with which the driver asserts his power. All are broken together. The ground idea is, that of complete deliverance from the Assyrian rule for the time being. But the antitypical idea of the Messianic deliverance is that which mostly fills the prophet’s vision. This deliverance is to be the counterpart of the Egyptian, in which the whole of Israel was redeemed, though here spoken of the “remnant” only. But the result shall be **as in the day of Midian**. See Judg. vii. In a worldly view, the delivering

pressor, as in the day of^e Midian. 5^a For every battle of the warrior is with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood; ^h but *this* shall be with burning and^e fuel of fire. 6ⁱ For unto us a child

^g Judg. 7. 22; Psa. 83. 9; chap. 10. 26.—ⁱ Gr. *When the whole battle of the warrior was*, etc.—^h Chap. 66. 15, 16.—⁵ Or, *and it was*,

force is small, but it is God's force, as it was in the days of Gideon. But who is Gideon's antitype, through whom all this is to occur? It is not stated. But the reason for the cessation of Assyria's oppression is given in the next verse.

5. **For every battle of the warrior**—Others render it, "Every boot of tramping warrior," or this in substance, for the words "of battle" and "warrior," occur in the original *only* here, and their meaning has to be made out from the context. **With confused noise**—Or, "in battle fray." The *boot*, or greave, may be generic for battle accoutrements, and all these shall be destroyed. Both the greaves and **garments**, or martial cloaks **rolled in blood**, bespattered and soaked, shall in the Messianic era of peace (chap. ii, 4) **be with burning**, as of no use whatever except for fuel. The scenes, so often witnessed on these Galilean fields, of war and of bloodshed, shall cease forever, and war weapons shall be no more. And as on these once dark regions, so shall it be in that era in all the earth.

6. **For unto us**—Jews first, then all the world. **A child is born**—The antitype of the child of chap. vii; a child of the Davidic house, as asserted in next verse. **Unto us**—Or, *for us*—for our benefit. **A son is given**—In chap. vii the child is given as a sign, but here as a gift of grace. He is the anointed Son of God. Psa. ii, 7. It would seem, according to Heb. ii, 14, that he is partaker of the same nature with the children of chap. viii, 18. **Government shall be upon his shoulder**—*Princedom unlimited* better accords with the original. Unlike Assyrian tributary rule, it is not oppressive to his people. Unlike all earthly potentates, he wears sover-

is born, unto us a^k son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called ^m Wonderful, Counsellor, ⁿ The mighty God, The everlasting Father, ^o The

etc.—⁶ Heb. *meat*.—ⁱ Chap. 7. 14; Luke 2. 11.—^k John 3. 16.—^l Matt. 23. 13; 1 Cor. 15. 25.—^m Judg. 13. 18.—ⁿ Tit. 2. 13.—^o Eph. 2. 14.

cignty as a robe everlastingly befitting him. **His name shall be called**—Literally, *They shall call*, etc. By universal admission he is **Wonderful**; rather, *a Wonder*; arresting the whole world's attention by his incarnation, words, and acts. **Counsellor**—A supreme teacher and guide to men, collectively and individually. **Mighty God**—אֵל גִּבּוֹר, (*el gibbor*.) Gesenius

renders this, *strong hero*; and De Wette adopts the same rendering. But this is a case where a parallel phrase close at hand must settle the meaning. Now in chapter x, 21, the same phrase is applied to deity, and the context will bear no other sense. The remnant of Jacob shall return unto the "mighty God,"—same words in the original. In chap. x, 20, 21, (which see.) the parallel to "Holy One of Israel"—which indisputably is the Lord Jehovah—is אֵל גִּבּוֹר, (*el gibbor*.)

and this, if not to be regarded fully as strong, yea a stronger expression for deity, is violently opposed to the laws of parallelism in Hebrew poetry. It would be nonsense to regard it otherwise. **Everlasting Father**—Or, *Father of eternity*. So the words and order of the Hebrew; and this, in Hebrew rhetoric means *eternal*, or *he is eternal*, or the eternal One. **Prince of Peace**—Having absolute command of peace, to whom all willing people shall be subject. That all these predicates belong to Messiah has, with little dispute, always been conceded. The earlier Jews and the Targums explained them as referring to Messiah; the later Jews (in order to parry the Christian view) as referring to Hezekiah. Modern rationalists concede them to Messiah, but emasculate them of their strong, divine sense, so as to reduce Messiah to a mere, but exalted, creature. Such

Prince of Peace. 7 Of the increase of *his* government and peace *there shall be* no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The

p Dan. 2. 44; Luke 1. 32, 33.

shifts in interpretation, in the face of the ancient view of this passage, confirmed by later unprejudiced exegesis, but too plainly show greater partisanship for theory than for simple truth.

7. **Of the increase**—More literally, *To the increase and prevalence.* **Of his government**—His principedom, sovereignty, rule, and peace. The essence of his universal rule is peace and harmony and love. **No end**—No limit. From Zion, as the figurative starting point, over the whole earth and the whole universe it shall extend. 2 Sam. vii, 11–16; Luke i, 32–34. **Upon the throne of David**—As explained by the above texts. **To order it**—The type of its construction is seen in 2 Sam. xiii, 13; Psalm lxxxix, 2. The heavenly antitype shall far exceed this. **To establish it**—Give it its eternally fixed character. **With judgment and with justice**—These are favourite terms with our prophet, (see chap. i, 27, and xi, 3,) denoting pure truth, and power and righteousness.

Such shall be the character of Messiah's kingdom as the only proper spiritual succession to the Davidic kingdom. 2 Sam. vii, 12. And for this will **the zeal**—the earnest care, even jealousy—**of the Lord of hosts**—of Him who commands all agencies in the universe—be manifest. Hitherto, Davidic sovereignty among the true Israel had been matter of faith and hope only. But prophecy now sees *the zeal of Jehovah* in earnest for its realization. The word "zeal" is an earnest word. Literally, it seems to mean *glowing fire*, from נָאֵץ, (*kânā*), to

be deep red. Delitzsch regards it as containing one of the deepest ideas of the Old Testament. It is two-sided. When used as here, it implies that Jehovah intensely loves his nation.

zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.

8 The Lord sent a word into Jacob, and it hath lighted upon Israel. ■ And all the people shall know, *even* Ephraim and the inhabitant of Samaria, that say

q 2 Kings 19. 31; chap. 37. 32.

But the fire of love has for its obverse side the fire of wrath. And upon this side the prophetic discourse is about to turn.

Divine judgments—specially upon Israel, 1–4.

Does this prophecy treat of judgments historically inflicted; or does it view events in space, not in time, as in chaps. iv and v? The latter is the more probable, if the apparent usage with Isaiah is to decide. The perspective peculiarity prevailingly attaches to his prophecies. The near future is seen in clear sketches, with a commingling of the present and the past in the entire picture. The more remote future shades away with diminishing features into increasing obscurity, but always with reference to the furthest and highest limit, namely, the complete fulness of Messiah's kingdom. Here the picture is of successive judgments befalling Israel without improving it; some in the past, some in the present, and some in the future, but represented in single groups, with the time element little regarded.

8. **The Lord**—Not Jehovah this time, but *Adonai*, the universal Lord and proprietor.—*Fürst*. **Sent a word into Jacob**—"Word," is a direct revelation, by prophets and by Moses. **It...lighted upon Israel**—Urgency of menace now enforces the broken divine law upon rebellious Israel.

9. **And all the people shall know**—Or, *the people shall know all of it*. Shall experience the full meaning of divine threatenings. **Ephraim and the inhabitant of Samaria**—The particular people intended in this prophecy. **That say in the pride and stoutness of heart**—The people of the northern kingdom, as against those of Judah and Jerusalem, haughtily utter what follows in the next verse. The

in the pride and stoutness of heart, **10** The bricks are fallen down, but we will build with hewn stones: the sycamores are cut down, but we will change them into cedars. **11** Therefore the Lord shall set up the adversaries of Rezin against him, and join his enemies together; **12** The Syrians before, and the Philistines behind; and they shall devour Israel with open mouth. * For

all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still.

13 For the people turneth not unto him that smiteth them, neither do they seek the Lord of hosts. **14** Therefore the Lord will cut off from Israel head and tail, branch and rush, in one day. **15** The ancient and honourable, he is the head; and the prophet that teacheth lies, he is the tail. **16** For

* 1 Kings 7. 9, 12; Mal. 1. 4.—7 Heb. *mingle*.
—8 Heb. *with whole mouth*.—s Chap. 5. 25;

10. 4; Jer. 4. 8.—t Jer. 5. 3; Hosea 7. 10.—u Chap. 10. 17; Rev. 18. 8.

prophet here seems to see Israel in its attitude toward Jerusalem before Tiglath-pileser has yet humbled Ephraim and Samaria.

10. Whether yet chastised by the visitation of Tiglath-pileser or not, the people of Israel remain defiant and contemptuous toward the capital of Judah. **The bricks are fallen down**—An admission on the part of Israel of its own apparent weakness but stern resolution; its strength being seemingly but as a wall of mud-baked bricks, which had become disintegrated, and were already crumbling away. **We will build with hewn stones**—And so make their position stronger than ever. This expression displays the audacity and self-confidence of backslidden Israel. **Sycamores**—A mean timber for strong and finely finished buildings. **Cedars**—A wood of much greater strength and durability. The thought is another illustration of the undue self-confidence and pride of these Israelites.

11. **Therefore**—A consequence fearful to Israel opens up. **The Lord shall set up**—The expression means, *He will exalt against him*. **Adversaries of Rezin**—These were either the Assyrians, or the allied Syrians, (now subject to Assyria,) after the overthrow of Rezin their king.

12. **The Syrians before**—All enemies to Israel were to be combined: Syria (as above explained) on the north, fighting now as subjects of Assyria; and the Philistines on the southwest. **With open mouth**—The figure is strong. See the full description of the array against Israel in 2 Kings xvi, 9. Hints of Syria's old

enmity are seen, also, in 2 Chron. xxviii, 22, 23. **For all this his anger is not turned away**—Here is resumed the refrain of chapter v, 25. It means that their impotence still continued, and, to appearance, was likely to become unalterably confirmed. **But his hand is stretched out still**—God inflicts one stroke after another, and waits for penitence; and it failing, he revisits with still another stroke to the same end.

13-15. **For the people turneth not**—One trial passes without result, except continued hardening; and now a new crime is suggested: the people *know* the object of the judgment, and they still repent not. **Unto him that smiteth them**—The “unto him” means, *as far as him*; so as fully to recognise the Smiter, and why he smites. Deut. iv, 30, 31. **Neither do they seek the Lord of hosts**—This parallel member balances the former, as poetry; but there is broader meaning in it. Not simply should they repent thoroughly, but they should be in heart-sympathy with and dependence on him. And the extra judgment now impending for this is the cutting off from Israel the leaders to evil ways. **Head and tail**—High and low. **Branch and rush**—The former term denotes a palm branch; the latter a marsh production, a weak stalk of one of the grasses. The Palmyra palm had been called, twenty-five centuries previously, “The king of grasses.” Sanscrit, *Trina raja*. Verse 15 explains these proverbial appellations. The false teacher, trimmer, and timeserver, are the meanest of bad leaders. This is always true.

^v the leaders of this people cause *them* to err; and ¹⁰ *they that are* led of them are ¹¹ destroyed. **17** Therefore the LORD ^w shall have no joy in their young men, neither shall have mercy on their fatherless and widows: ^x for every one is a hypocrite and an evil doer, and every mouth speaketh ¹² folly. ^y For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still.

18 For wickedness ^z burneth as the

^v Chap. 3, 12.—⁹ Or, *they that call them blessed*.—¹⁰ Or, *they that are called blessed of them*.—¹¹ Heb. *swallowed up*.—¹² Psa. 147, 10, 11.—^a Micah 7, 2.—¹² Or, *villany*.

fire: it shall devour the briars and thorns, and shall kindle in the thickets of the forest, and they shall mount up *like* the lifting up of smoke. **19** Through the wrath of the LORD of hosts is ^a the land darkened, and the people shall be as the ¹³ fuel of the fire: ^b no man shall spare his brother. **20** And he shall ¹⁴ snatch on the right hand, and be hungry; and he shall eat on the left hand, ^c and they shall not be satisfied: ^d they shall eat

^y Verses 12, 21; chap. 5, 25; 10, 4.—^z Chap. 10, 17; Mal. 4, 1.—^a Chap. 8, 23.—¹³ Heb. *meat*.—^b Micah 7, 2, 6.—¹⁴ Heb. *eat*.—^c Lev. 26, 26.—^d Chap. 49, 26; Jer. 19, 9.

16. The leaders... led—See chap. iii, 12. The “leaders” and the “led” are both swallowed up in misery: the former because of their bad leadership, the latter as the result of their wrong following. Numbers xvi, 30.

17. No joy in their young men—God, because of the perversity of even their “young men,” can take no delight in them; for they are not, as they should be, the hope of the nation. And if due judgment is to sweep through the nation, it will take all. **Fatherless and widows**—The Old Testament religion enjoins extreme care of these classes; hence the expression that he will have no **mercy** on these implies an utter exhaustion of divine forbearance. **Every one... a hypocrite**—There is no sincere recognition of God among them, but every so-called service of him is a pretence. **Folly**—Wickedness. **For all this**—Because of all this: Israel’s resolute impenitence. **Stretched out still**—Notwithstanding severe judgments already, more will follow.

18. We have passed two strophes, and here enter on the third, which closes the chapter. They are apparently artificial and antiphonic. Possibly the prophet pronounced the grave causes of judgment upon judgment, and his disciple-adherents added the gloomy refrain. The scene may have occurred in the temple court, where were gathered, as by appointment, the king, nobles, false prophets and leaders, and the people. More gladly did they this time listen than if themselves were the immediate objects of the denounced judgments.

They were, however, familiar enough with them as of their own deserving; and, probably, in their minds were likely to be yet more. There can be little doubt of Isaiah’s large indirect influence on the affairs of state. But Ahaz was so committed to an Assyrian policy, and so entangled by it, that the prophet’s statesmanship was less apparent in his reign; but obviously more in that of Hezekiah, his son and successor. **For wickedness**—Prevailing impiety and blasphemy. **Burneth as the fire**—Extends as fire does among thorns and thickets. Or, it smoulders, when long pent up, then bursts forth irresistibly. See Hosea vii, 6. Wickedness produces its own punishment. **Briars and thorns**—An image, probably, of the lower grades of the population, where the fires of corruption and punishment are first seen. **Thickets of the forest**—Among ranks grading upward, till high and low receive the conflagration together. **Mount up like... smoke**—The “smoke” of their destruction ascendeth to heaven.

19. Through the wrath—Prophecy breathes an intense ethical spirit, expressing how God feels toward wrong in itself. **Land darkened**—Or, blackened by fire of judgment—the besotted people being the fuel thereof. **No man... spare**—When humanity loses all pity for itself the extreme of judgment has come.

20. Snatch on the right hand—This figure is a famine view, as the result of inordinate self-will and cruelty in times of anarchy.

21. Manasseh, Ephraim—The

every man the flesh of his own arm: **21** Manasseh, Ephraim; and Ephraim, Manasseh: *and they together shall be against Judah.* ^cFor all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand *is* stretched out still.

CHAPTER X.

WOE unto them that ^adecree unrighteous decrees, and ^bthat write grievousness *which* they have prescribed; **2** To ^bturn aside the needy from judg-

^c Verses 12, 17; chap. 5, 25; 10, 4.—^a Psalm 58, 2; 94, 20.—^b 1 Or, *to the writers that write grievousness.*

close tribal relationships in Israel are represented as broken, and each tribe as preying on the other, even of the same federation, while they are together scheming to break up Judah. The two tribes named are occasionally put for the whole of the northern kingdom, (see 2 Chron. xxx, 1;) so here. Their territory lay beside each other, among the rich hills and plains of middle Palestine. The illustrative tropes of this strophe exhibit the nation of Israel in the last throes of dissolution.

CHAPTER X.

1-4. Is not this last strophe the *moral* of the previous three? It is directed against unjust authorities and judges. The prophet had stood, as it were, at the end of the calamities he had described as befalling the nation of Israel for sins such as he here inveighs against. A woe is uttered against framers of decrees to defraud the needy, the widows, and the fatherless, and the question is asked in the third verse, What will be the result to these wicked authorities in the visitations already described? The answer is plain, as given in verse 4.

1. Decree unrighteous decrees—Unjust lawmakers. "Making of Eastern decrees differs from ours. They are first written, then the magistrate authenticates or annuls them." So is the Arab manner. "When an Arab wanted a favour of the Emir he applied to the secretary, who drew up a decree according to the request of the party. If the Emir granted the favour he printed his seal upon it;

and to take away the right from the poor of my people, that widows may be their prey, and *that* they may rob the fatherless!" **3** And ^cwhat will ye do in ^dthe day of visitation, and in the desolation *which* shall come from far? to whom will ye flee for help? and where will ye leave your glory? **4** Without me they shall bow down under the prisoners, and they shall fall under the slain. ^eFor all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand *is* stretched out still.

^b Lam. 3, 35; Amos 2, 7; Mal. 3, 5.—^c Job 31, 14.—^d Hosea 9, 7; Luke 19, 44.—^e Chap. 5, 25; 9, 12, 17, 21.

if not, he returned it torn to the petitioner."—*Sir John Chardin, in Harmer.* The above may help to explain the remainder of the verse. **That write grievousness . . . prescribed**—Iniquitous decisions prescribing oppression, injustice, and the like.

2. This verse specifies some of those decisions. See further on chapter xxix, 21. **To take away**—Or, *tear away, the right.* Or, as rendered in Eccles. v, 8, *violent perverting.*

3. Day of visitation—Jer. xiii, 21. A coming inspection with a view of ascertaining the character of the case. **And in the desolation**—In the sudden loud crash of ruin. Prov. i, 27. **Come from far**—But certainly and swiftly. **Where...leave...glory**—So as to find it again. "Glory," here, means that which is weighty and valuable: money, possessions, any thing placed on deposit for safety. The answer implied is, *nowhere.*

4. Without me—Apart from my help. The moral is, Leave all else, and flee to me. There is no other door to safety. **They shall bow down**—Sinking for very shame and self-reproach lower than other captives, or even to lie beneath the slain in war. The refrain is again chanted, and the series of strophes pointing to the captivity of Israel closes. But black as the prophecy is for Israel, it becomes blacker for Assyria, its foe and captor, in the next piece recited by Isaiah. However dark the shades settle on Israel—God's own chosen but erring ones—somehow they retire measurably in virtue of a better few still preserved among them.

5 ² O Assyrian, 'the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand is mine indignation. 6 I will send him against 'a hypocritical nation, and against the people of my wrath will I ^h give him a charge, to take the spoil, and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets. 7 'Howbeit he meaneth not so, neither doth his heart

think so; but *it is* in his heart to destroy and cut off nations not a few. 8 ^{*} For he saith, *Are* not my princes altogether kings? 9 *Is* not ¹Calno ^mas Carchemish? *is* not Hamath as Arpad? *is* not Samaria ^aas Damascus? 10 As my hand hath found the kingdoms of the idols, and whose graven images did excel them of Jerusalem and of Samaria;

2 Or, *Woe to the Assyrian.* Heb. *Asshur.*—*f* Jer. 51. 20.—3 Or, *though.*—*g* Chap. 9. 17.—*h* Jer. 34. 23.—4 Heb. *to lay them a treading.*

i Gen. 50. 20; Mic. 4. 12.—*k* 2 Kin. 18. 24, 33; 19. 10.—*l* Amos 6. 2.—*m* 2 Chron. 35. 20.—*n* 2 Kings 16. 9.

ASSYRIA'S DESTRUCTION PREDICTED; JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM UNDER MESSIAH; AND A HYMN OF PRAISE THEREON, chap. x, 5—xii, 6.

5. The pieces of prophecy beginning here and closing with chap. xii are with fair reason thought to belong to the period of Ahaz. The objections to this, found in verses 9–11 and 28–32, will be considered in the comments there. High and miraculous prophetic power in our seer is assumed throughout, of course, as hitherto.

Judgment upon Israel has been fearfully depicted as seen in vision; and now upon Assyria, the instrument of Israel's calamities, (verse 15,) like judgments are denounced. **O Assyrian**—Woe to, or, as some suppose, Ho, what hol address in the second person rather than in the third. **Rod of mine anger**—The instrument to execute it. **The staff in their hand**—The sceptre he wields over punishment-deserving Israel is the sign of my indignation. The general term "Assyrian" includes king and people.

6. **Against**—Or, *upon*. **A hypocritical nation**—Israel is meant, but Judah is not to escape. The Assyrian knew not that God sends him, or allows him, with far different purpose from his own, to invade his fallen people, **the people of his wrath** who have persistently become objects of divine disfavour. **To take...spoil...prey**—Literally, *To spoil spoil, and to prey prey*. The Hebrew has a strong, though meagre, vocabulary. **To tread them down**—Hebrew, *To lay them a treading*. Ps. xviii, 42.

7. **He meaneth not so**—The Assyrian is unconsciously God's instrument in inflicting punishment. He

thinks only to build himself up. No thanks to him for executing the divine judgments. Woe to him, rather. His motives are worldly, selfish, and impure.

8. **For he saith**—He fully exhibits what his spirit is—absolutely that of worldly ambition. **My princes**—Satraps, vicegerents, generals. Are they not equal to the greatest of kings elsewhere? Assyria, Babylonia, and Persia were great empires, consisting of great numbers of provinces far and near, over which were placed governors called satraps.

9. **Is not Calno as Carchemish**—Rawlinson puts Calno, or Calneh, sixty miles southeast by east from Babylon. Carchemish, he thinks, is not the classical Circesium, but lay higher up the Euphrates. **Hamath...Arpad**—Both were in Syria; the former is the present Hamah on the Orontes; the latter is not now identified, but it lay probably near Hamath. See Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*. **Samaria as Damascus**—Both capitals, one of Israel, the other of Syria. The latter was the first to be taken, hence the comparison. All these were easy to take by such an overgrown power. The very question, "Is not Samaria as Damascus?" (that is, is it not as easy to take?) implies the former as yet untaken; hence the time is yet within the reign of Ahaz.

10, 11. If Samaria *is* yet untaken, the conqueror is seen advancing toward it; nor will he stop at that conquest, but will aim to cripple Jerusalem. But Isaiah has once and again assured Ahaz that Jerusalem shall not be harmed if he only will look for help to Jehovah, not to Assyria. **As I have**

11 Shall I not, as I have done unto Samaria and her idols, so do to Jerusalem and her idols? 12 Wherefore it shall come to pass, *that*, when the Lord hath performed his whole work upon mount Zion and on Jerusalem, I will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his high looks. 13 For he saith, By the strength of my hand I have done it, and by my wisdom; for I am prudent: and I have removed the bounds

o2 Kings 19, 31.—p Jer. 50, 18.—5 Heb. *visit upon*.—6 Heb. *of the greatness of the heart*. q Chap. 37, 24; Ezek. 28, 4; Dan. 4, 30.

done unto Samaria—Only a prophetic past time; the usual commingling of the tenses in facts and events seen in groups, not in time, but in space.

12. To the boastful speech of the Assyrian succeeds a prediction of his fate. The limit of divine permission in inflicting judgments on Israel and Judah is reached. The answer of God to these boastings is, that when Israel, (first in captivity,) and Jerusalem, (next, by a siege,) shall have had due judgment inflicted for disregard of Jehovah, the arrogant Assyrian himself shall suddenly lose, in the case of Jerusalem, the game almost within his grasp, and his haughtiness shall receive its just judgment and rebuke. **Hath performed his whole work**—Of disciplinary correction. **Zion... Jerusalem**—People originally intrusted with the true religion, with Jerusalem as its central seat. Israel and Judah are seen in juxtaposition in this expression, and the same may be true of the Assyrian in these passages. That is, in perspective prophecy here the whole historic career of Assyria and Babylon may be in view, though the chief features of Assyria, on its nearer side to the prophet, mostly occupies his mind. **Stout heart**—His *hauteur*, pride, and arrogance. **Glory of his high looks**—This defines the other member of the parallelism.

13. In what he further says, the Assyrian is represented as acting in accordance with his proper character. **By the strength of my hand**—Being a successful great world-power, Assyria is seen as always confident of her strength. **I have done it**—All

of the people, and have robbed their treasures, and I have put down the inhabitants like a valiant man: 14 And my hand hath found as a nest the riches of the people: and as one gathereth eggs *that are left*, have I gathered all the earth; and there was none that moved the wing, or opened the mouth, or peeped. 15 Shall the axe boast itself against him that heweth therewith? or shall the saw magnify itself against him that shaketh it? as if the

7 Or, *like many people*.—r Job 31, 25.—s Jer. 51, 20.—8 Or, *as if a rod should shake them that lift it up*.

the verbs here are to be taken as expressing customary action—the Greek and German imperfect tense. “I do it,” or “I am,” as a habit, as is customary with me, and in accordance with my ability and my character, *doing it*. **And I have removed**—Or, and I remove. **Have put down**—I bring down, as a mighty one, *them that are on thrones*.

14. The same self-glorifying goes on. **My hand hath found**—Has only to reach out and seize. **As a nest**—As easy as an undefended bird's nest. **Riches of**—The wealth of the peoples whom I attack, so powerless are they to resist. **Eggs that are left**—Abandoned by the parent bird. **That moved the wing**—“None fluttered the wing, or opened the beak, or peeped.” The figure is carried here to eggs hatched, and young birds, which also had abandoned the nest. The word chirped or peeped is the same as in chap viii, 19, where it means the low cry of false soothsayers; here it is the cry of young birds whom the spoiler's hand snatches away. In chap. xxxviii, 14, the same word means (Authorized Version) the cry or chatter of a swallow or a crane. The boaster means, that such everywhere is the dread of his name there is universal silence. None dare to resist his terrible assaults.

15. The representation next given is that of a most foolish sin. The Assyrian's bragging is like that of an implemēt, such as an *axe, saw, or stick*, against him who uses it. **Him that shaketh it**—“It” is the saw. The verb is *lithpach*, and denotes,

rod should shake *itself* against them that lift it up, *or* as if the staff should lift up *itself*, as if it were no wood. **16** Therefore shall the Lord, the Lord of hosts, send among his 'fat ones leanness; and under his glory he shall kindle a burning like the burning of a fire. **17** And the light of Israel shall be for a fire, and his Holy One for a flame: "and it shall

burn and devour his thorns and his briars in one day; **18** And shall consume the glory of his forest, and of ^v his fruitful field, ¹⁰ both soul and body: and they shall be as when a standardbearer fainteth. **19** And the rest of the trees of his forest shall be ¹¹ few, that a child may write them.

20 And it shall come to pass in that

9 Or, that which is *not wood*.—^t Chap. 5. 17.
—^u Chapter 9. 18; 27. 4.—^v 2 Kings 19. 23.

10 Heb. *from the soul, and even to the flesh*.
—11 Heb. *number*.

"moving to and fro." **No wood**—One word, *not-wood*, which is *man*. God stands to the man as the not-wood, or man, stands to the wood. The boasting Assyrian forgets that he, a small cause, a small power, is placed in a small sphere of free action by Him who is the Cause of all causes, the Power of all powers. Assyria shall certainly fall some day by the sword of Not-man, that is, of one who is very different from man. Deut. xxxii, 21; Jer. v, 7.

16. Therefore...the Lord—*Haadon*, a term implying supremacy, supreme judge, sovereign ruler. **The Lord of hosts**—The term denoting commander of all agencies. **Shall...send**—Will commission one to inflict upon the **fat ones**, or well-fed Assyrian magnates, (observe the masses of flesh in the men of the Assyrian sculptures,) *razon*, a withering disease, like a galloping consumption. This word is among the diseases named in Lev. xxvi, 16; Deut. xxviii, 22. **And under his glory**—The Assyrian's glory was his army. **A burning like the burning of a fire**—The Hebrew alliteration is, *Yekad, y'kod, cicodish*, painted tones, such as almost makes audible the crackling, spluttering, and hissing of fires burning all within their reach. Storms of lightning, plague, and such like agencies were at God's command in destroying the Assyrian armies. See 2 Kings vii, 6, and xix, 35.

17. The light of Israel—The word "light," means light, whether literal or figurative. Here it is figurative, and applies to God as the enlightener of Israel by his word and Spirit, and as having possible allusion to the pillar that guided Israel through the desert. **Shall be for a fire**—While he is a

"light" to Israel, he is a "fire" to Assyria. **His Holy One for a flame**—Israel's "Holy One," often called the Holy One of Israel. **Shall burn**—This fire and flame shall fall in consuming judgment upon **his thorns and his briars**. (The Assyrian's army so denoted.) **In one day**—That is, very suddenly.

18. The glory of his forest—The army, compared to a forest for the great number of men, their compact body when in array, and their up-raised lances. **His fruitful field**—Parallel to "forest;" denoting a park stocked with noble trees; or else, antithetic to "forest," and meaning a cleared and cultivated field, but applied still to the army in its apparently prosperous state, though soon to be destroyed. **Both soul and body**—Literally, *from soul even to the flesh*; beginning at the vitals and working to the outward frame; that is, the consumption shall be *total*. **As when a standardbearer fainteth**—And in consequence the whole line of battle melts away in panic. (*Kimchi*.)

19. And the rest of the trees—The few men that are left after the consumption of the army, the "forest" figure being still kept up. **That a child may write them**—Or, number them. That is, the "trees" are so few as scarcely to exceed the digits; in poetry not an extravagant expression.

Thus much concerning the divine judgments on Assyria in return for its selfish part in the punishments of Israel, but probably a prophetic description in the gross; that is, genuine account of all punishments that ever came on the great world-kingdom in the East. The picture is seen in spaces, with its nearer parts dis-

day, *that* the remnant of Israel, and such as are escaped of the house of Jacob, ^w shall no more again stay upon him that smote them; but shall stay upon the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, in truth. **21** ^x The remnant shall return, *even* the remnant of Jacob, unto the mighty God. **22** ^y For though thy peo-

^w See 2 Kings 16. 7; 2 Chronicles 28. 20.—^x Chap. 7. 3.—^y Rom. 9. 27.—^z Chap. 6. 13.

ple Israel be as the sand of the sea, ^z yet a remnant ¹² of them shall return: ^a the consumption decreed shall overflow ¹³ with righteousness. **23** ^b For the Lord God of hosts shall make a consumption, even determined, in the midst of all the land.

24 Therefore thus saith the Lord God

¹² Heb. *in*, or, *among*.—^a Chap. 28. 22.—¹³ Or, *in*.—^b Chap. 28. 22; Dan. 9. 27; Rom. 9. 28.

ple Israel be as the sand of the sea, ^z yet a remnant ¹² of them shall return: ^a the consumption decreed shall overflow ¹³ with righteousness. **23** ^b For the Lord God of hosts shall make a consumption, even determined, in the midst of all the land.

The Remnant of Israel—a parenthetical section—verses 20–23.

20. With the small remnant of an almighty avenging power on Assyria, the prophet now compares the remnant of Israel. Here too is a picture in space of the truly good in the whole of Israel, perhaps prominently of Ephraim, (as with this section of Israel the prophet began this chapter,) but of Judah as well. **The remnant...escaped**—See 2 Chron. xxx, 6. When Ephraim was despoiled as a nation there were still remaining many Israelites whom Hezekiah invited to join in worship at Jerusalem. These may be intended in the above words. Yet chap. xi, 16 shows that brief period of repentance to be an historical type of a larger restoration. **Stay**—Depend for support in national emergencies. Israel looked to Syria as against Judah, and was foiled in its object. Had it *stayed* on Jehovah it would not have had the catastrophe from Assyria. But the lesson is even more important here for Judah at this time. Both the prophetically-seen remnants of Israel and Judah will have so heeded the lesson as **no more again to stay upon him that smote them**, but henceforth on the Lord. **In truth**—Honestly, sincerely, never again to be inveigled into disregard of Jehovah. Assyria's judgment on Israel, and Babylon's on Judah, yet to come, will thus become Israel's salvation.

21. **The remnant**—They shall return to Jehovah, who in the past was

the Mighty One (*El Gibbor*, see note on chap. ix, 7) to Israel. They shall return to God in Christ. See Hosea iii, 5, where Jehovah and David's Son are placed side by side. Isaiah's son, Shear-jashub—the fact of whose birth and the significance of whose name (chap. vii, 3) no doubt are still familiar—brings up this doctrine of the “remnant,” etc., with vividness.

22. The use of the word **remnant**, though connected with a threatening, is attended with promise. **Though thy people Israel be as the sand of the sea**—So numerous as to be impossible to count them, yet only a “remnant” **shall return**—This is the threatening. But they, the few, **shall** certainly “return,” and in penitence. This is the promise. A visible Church shall remain, even on the plains of Babylon. And St. Paul (Romans xi, 12) reveals a mystery contained in this promise, namely, its enlargement in the upheaval of the Gentile world, whose destiny was so long unexplained. Israel's abasement becomes thus the occasion of the riches of the Gentiles. Israel revolts. Its **consumption is decreed**—determined on in the divine mind—and through the fidelity of the few a great world of new people shall be brought in. The **consumption** is the result of an **overflow with righteousness**.

23. **Shall make a consumption**—Rather, a final work, namely, of impenitent Israel. **Even determined**—The work of cutting off the larger part of Israel for persistent disobedience, is a decisive work; or, as St. Paul interprets it, Rom. xi, “it is cut short in righteousness,” or as the principles of eternal justice require. **All the land**—The “land” of their oppressors, and cutting off at the same

of hosts, O my people that dwellest in Zion, ^cbe not afraid of the Assyrian: he shall smite thee with a rod,¹⁴ and shall lift up his staff against thee, after the manner of ^dEgypt. **25** ^eFor yet a very little while, ^fand the indignation shall cease, and mine anger in their destruction.

26 And the Lord of hosts shall stir up ^ga scourge for him according to the

^c Chap. 37. 6.—¹⁴ Or, *but he shall lift up his staff for thee.*—^d Exodus 14.—^e Chap. 54. 7.—^f Dan. 11. 36.—^g 2 Kings 19. 35.

time many of the rebellious and captive Jews. The rest of the Jews—a small number, but persistently obedient—shall return. These last four verses possibly were not a public declaration, but a private one to disciples adhering to Isaiah in his school at Jerusalem. Delitzsch, indeed, regards the whole section from chap. vii. 5–12, inclusive as esoteric, that is, addresses to disciples merely.

24. More public, probably, was the following encouragement. **O my people...** **Zion**—The inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem. **Be not afraid of the Assyrian**—As regards the Assyrian, the destinies of Israel and Judah were involved, though differently; the former, to be at once crippled and finally overthrown, the latter to be, for the time being, threatened only. Hence this encouragement. **He shall smite**—Better, though he smite thee, or inflict partial chastisement as thou deservest. **With a rod... staff**—These are equivalent figures for oppression. **After the manner of Egypt**—The best exegetical authorities favour reading this—not, as on the way to Egypt, alluding to Sennacherib's inflicting a blow on Judah when he was on the way to conquer Egypt, but, as in the manner, or after the example of Egypt; the same formula (proverbial) is also found in Amos iv. 10.

25. Yet a very little while—Time not definite, as in chapter xvi. 14, nor does it date from the present—but it is very *soon*. **The indignation shall cease**—Whose indignation?—the Assyrian's or God's? To be parallel with the next clause, it is God's—executed, however, by the Assyrian. Hence the indefinite expression. After due chastisement of Israel and Judah

slaughter of ^hMidian at the rock of Oreb: and ⁱas his rod *was* upon the sea, so shall he lift it up after the manner of Egypt. **27** And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* ^khis burden ^lshall be taken away from off thy shoulder, and his yoke from off thy neck, and the yoke shall be destroyed because of ^mthe anointing. **28** He is come to Aiath, he

^h Judg. 7. 25; chap. 9. 4.—ⁱ Exod. 14. 26, 27. ^k Chap. 14. 25.—^l 15 Heb. *shall remove.*—^m 1 Psal. 105. 15; Dan. 9. 24; 1 John 2. 20.

by the hand of the Assyrian, indignation is at an end. Then the **anger**, of which he was the executioner on others, shall tend, or turn, to the Assyrian's destruction.

26. The Lord shall stir up a scourge—When that "scourge" comes it shall be sudden, like that of the Midianites by Gideon, and like that of Pharaoh in the Red Sea. **The rock of Oreb**—The place where the Ephraimites slew Oreb, a king of Midian. Judges vii. 25. Jehovah is imaged as swinging a whip over Assyria, and as stretching forth his staff or sceptre over the sea of troubles (such, no doubt, is its meaning) into which Israel and Judah were driven; and that sea is seen to divide for escape to Israel and for destruction to Assyria. **After the manner of Egypt**—That is, just as Pharaoh was overwhelmed in the Red Sea. This is a judgment occurring in prophetic time.

27. In that day—That is, the day when this prediction, uttered in ideal time, shall be actually fulfilled. **His burden**—The imperial subjection on the true Israel. **His yoke**—The yoke, as borne by oxen, is always in Scripture a metaphor for subjection. **Shall be taken away**—Shall depart as if spontaneously. **Shall be destroyed**—Or, shall vanish, as into non-existence. **Because of the anointing**—Literally, *from before the oil*:—in the presence of an anointed new king of Israel, of whom David was the type. Chap. xi treats of these times in more glorious fulness.

28. Meanwhile another episode of the towering cedar—the Assyrian in his menacing march upon Jerusalem—must come in. All recent commentators admit this to be a scene in vision.

is passed to Migron; at Michmash he hath laid up his carriages: **29** They are gone over ^m the passage: they have taken up their lodging at Geba; Ramah is afraid; ⁿ Gibeah of Saul is fled. **30** ¹⁶ Lift up thy voice, O daughter ^o of Gallim: cause it to be heard unto ^p Laish, ^q O poor Anathoth. **31** ^r Madmenah is removed; the inhabitants of Gebim gather themselves to flee. **32** As yet

^m 1 Sam. 13. 23.—ⁿ 1 Sam. 11. 4.—¹⁶ Heb. *Cry shrill with thy voice.*—^o 1 Sam. 25. 44.—^p Judg. 18. 7.—^q Josh. 21. 18.

It scarcely can be history, for the route described is impassable to so large a body loaded with accoutrements and luggage. The plan of the picture is that of a large army coming as in a straight line from Assyria, spreading terror on the villages near to Jerusalem, and having the city itself quite within its grasp, when suddenly it vanishes out of view, as by the sudden and unseen might of an irresistible providence. Delitzsch says, that esthetically considered, the description is one of the most magnificent human poetry has ever produced.

29-34. The towns or villages lay within from two to twelve miles (English) north-northeast from Jerusalem.

"He comes from Ayyath; (Ai, probably ten to twelve miles from Jerusalem;) passes through Migron, (a place not now identified.) In Michmash (two miles south of Ai) he leaves his baggage; (hills and gorges here are impassable to carriages:) they go through a pass. Let Geba be our quarters for the night. (This is a command to the army.) Ramah trembles; Gibeah of Saul flees; (both places are three or four miles bearing north.) Scream aloud, O daughter of Gallim; (twice mentioned in the Old Testament, but site unknown.) Only listen, O Laish. (The course is now doubtless zigzag.) Poor Anathoth! (Jeremiah's home, a priestly city quite near to Jerusalem.) Madmenah hurries away. The inhabitants of Gebim rescued! He (the Assyrian) still halts at Nob today, (close upon Jerusalem;) swings his hand over the mountain of the daughter of Zion, the hill of Jerusalem. (Almighty providence now interferes.) Behold, the Lord Jehovah of hosts lops

shall he remain ^{*} at Nob that day: he shall ^{*} shake his hand *against* the mount of ^{*} the daughter of Zion, the hill of Jerusalem. **33** Behold, the Lord, the Lord of hosts, shall lop the bough with terror: and ^{*} the high ones of stature *shall be* hewn down, and the haughty shall be humbled. **34** And he shall cut down the thickets of the forest with iron, and Lebanon shall fall ¹⁷ by a mighty one.

^r Josh. 15. 81.—^s 1 Sam. 21. 1; 22. 19; Neh. 11. 32.—^t Chap. 13. 2.—^u Chap. 37. 22.—^v See Amos 2. 9.—¹⁷ Or, *mightily*.

down the branches with terrible force, and those of towering growth are hewn down, and the lofty are humbled." Branches . . . lofty . . . towering growth. (These terms imply the leaders of the army. Some crushing blow is seen to strike down the forest of leaders, nobles, commanders.) *And he fells the thickets of the forest with iron.* (The "thickets" are the serried battalions, cut down as by the sword of an unseen or unnamed army.) *And Lebanon, it falls by a majestic one.* (Assyria is the towering cedar, collectively named Lebanon, the mount in the north on which it grows.) Thus the fate of the imperial power of the world is given in this short, quick, and awful description. For geographical names the reader will be instructed by Smith's Dictionary of the Bible. It is quite the habit of commentators to apply the above picture to Sennacherib, the great Assyrian king. Even those who claim this prophetic section, from chap. vii-xii inclusive, as belonging to and as having been delivered during the period of Ahaz, find it convenient to see Sennacherib as the foremost character in that scene. It may be so. But if so, the prophet overleaps dates and defined periods in the pictures he draws, and makes anachronisms of small account. And this is easy to believe. He sees things perspectively in juxtaposition, yet in some sort of succession, indeed; and some things may loom up and brighten on his vision, though beyond and out of range with the particular period about which in specific detail he may be treating. Sennacherib was in the last years of his troubling Syria and Egypt, and

CHAPTER XI.

AND ^athere shall come forth a rod out of the stem of ^bJesse, and ^ca Branch shall grow out of his roots:

^a Chap. 53. 2; Zech. 6. 12; Rev. 5. 5. — ^b Acts 13. 23; verse 10.

king Hezekiah; according to the canon of Ptolemy, in the last seven years, according to 2 Kings xviii, 13 and Isa. xxxvi, 1, in the last fifteen years, of Hezekiah's reign. But it matters little. The chief object of the above picture was not to place Sennacherib as a great figure in it, though the prophet, for aught we know, may have seen him there according to laws of prophetic vision. The great object was illustrative instruction to Israel and Judah—to the latter, certainly, to Ahaz and those around him and the remnant, the better few—to *trust in Jehovah* and not to trust in nor fear the Assyrian, who, after his aid to Judah in quelling Syria and Ephraim, had turned to subject Judah to himself.

CHAPTER XI.

And now what follows? Joy, indeed, to the true Davidic royalty, but not through any incumbent or successor then having title to the throne. Isaiah even passes by David. It is no longer royal *lineage*, but a going back as if to begin anew the line of Jesse, the sire of David, the farmer of Bethlehem. The apostatized house of David is like a tree become dead, first at the top, then at the branches, then at the trunk, till it falls, leaving vitality only at the stump; leaving the root still fresh, but without stem, branches, or crown. When the great world-kingdom, Assyria, is at its height of strength, like the glorious Lebanon forest, the fleshly house of David is in its uttermost depth, according to the prior warning of chap. vi, 9-13, mutilated and reduced to its low Bethlehem origin. But the tables will turn, and the Eastern great imperial power is to fall, and the house of David is to start anew with glorious renewal of its youth.

1. There shall come forth a rod

2 "And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of

^c Chap. 4. 2; Jer. 23. 5. — ^c Chap. 61. 1; Matt. 3. 16; John 1. 32, 33; 3. 34.

out of the stem of Jesse—The "rod" is a branch, a shoot, a sucker. The "stem" is a stump, or a nucleus of rootlets, either below or above ground. **A branch shall grow out of his roots**—*Netzer*, "a branch," is a verdant and vigorous shoot. The chosen remnant of the royal house of David, which has sunk down to the insignificance from which it sprang, is the twig, shoot, branch, or whichever of the terms here supplied be taken, and is to build up by the new growth another trunk and crown. Delitzsch and Kay think they see in the insignificant *Netzer* the figure for the despised Nazarene; despised now, but in the sense of the applied figure *bright, verdant, growing*, he is to be hereafter the universally acknowledged King of glory. Also, in the verb *phara, to grow, to be fruitful*, reference is supposed to be made to Ephratah, or Bethlehem, so that in this verse allusion is thought to be made by divine intent both to Nazareth, where Christ's birth was announced, and to Bethlehem, where it occurred. Both places are humble, and, to worldly Jews, of little account. Such etymologies are of use chiefly in homiletic exegesis. There is coincidence of sound and sense in the words referred to; but beyond this there is vague uncertainty.

2. **The Spirit of the Lord**—The Holy Spirit of Jehovah, who communicates the whole creative fulness of divine powers. **Shall rest upon him**—In dove-like descent, as at the Jordan, with fulness of miraculous powers, and upon his person as the true temple. Three pairs of virtues now follow. **Wisdom and understanding**—These are poetically joined, but perhaps as equivalent expressions. They relate to the intellectual life. **Counsel and might**—Corresponding, as in chap. ix, 7, to "Counsellor and

the fear of the LORD; **3** And shall make him of ¹quick understanding in the fear of the LORD: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: **4** But ²with righteousness shall he

¹ Heb. *scent*, or, *smell*.—*e* Psa. 72. 2, 4; Rev. 19. 11.—² Or, *argue*.

mighty God." These are combined with "wisdom and understanding" in Prov. viii, 14. They pertain to the practical life. **Knowledge and... fear of the Lord**—These have direct relation to God. Knowledge is founded on fellowship of love, and fear of Jehovah is absorbed in holy reverence. Virtually, "the Spirit" is used seven times. Is this accidental? Theosophy says, No; and seeks its "mystical symmetries" among examples like this, of "sacred sevens," "triple pairs," etc. For sacred numbers see Whedon's supplementary note to chapter vi, of Commentary on Luke. Also Delitzsch's Biblical Psychology, Mahan's Psalmonia, and Stuart on the Apocalypse. App. 2, vol. ii.

3. Shall make him—The Spirit of Jehovah is still the subject. **Of quick understanding**—This is a peculiar expression. Literally, *Of quick smell*, or *his fragrance*. The meaning seems to be, that he breathes in the fear of the Lord, as in a sweet fragrance, the element natural to him. Normally he takes delight in it. Gracious deeds are to him the greatest pleasure. **Not judge after the sight of his eyes**—After the external appearance. **Neither reprove**—Nor shall he decide or judge. **After the hearing of his ears**—Or, by what sounds to the ear *plausible* merely. If the fear of Jehovah is fragrance to him, all his faculties are quick discerners for him of what is true, right, and good.

4. With righteousness shall he judge the poor—Shall see that their cause is not repressed, but dealt with exactly right: "the poor" who cannot commend their case to the eye. **The meek**—Who use no adroit nor eloquent words to win the ear. **The rod of his mouth**—The words of his mouth are the rod which shatters. Psa. ii, 9; Rev. i, 16. He needs no visible

judge the poor, and ²reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall ¹smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. **5** And ³righteousness shall be the girdle of his

¹ Job 4. 9; Mal. 4. 6; 2 Thess. 2. 8; Rev. 1. 16; 2. 16; 19. 15.—² See Eph. 6. 14.

sceptre: his is a fearful presence to the guilty conscience.

5. Righteousness...girdle of his loins—That which is spotlessly just in his dealings with men is, by figure, the cincture or band which shall engirdle him. **Girdle**—This essential article in the dress of the East, both among men and women—worn about the waist, or, if loose, the loins—was of leather or linen, cheap or costly, and was used to hold in place or gird up, as might be needed, the outside flowing garment which it enclosed. It was common to represent the better habits under the figure of clothing; the meaning of which was, that they adhere to character as inseparably and closely as the garment did to the body to which it was bound. Job xxix, 14; Psalm cix, 18; Isaiah lxi, 10.

Nothing is more clear than that the new succession out of Jesse is the Messiah, with features in the description here much like those belonging to the humble and holy Jesus of Nazareth. "The root of Jesse" is a figure which answers to the lowly remnant-reduction of Israel, who become, instead of a worldly Davidic house, a lowly body of true adherents to Jehovah despite of all vicissitudes and tribulations; and become, also, the genuine stock out of which the incarnate and true David is to arise. As a ruler and administrator he is, in the last five verses, set before us as making earth as peaceful a realm as is heaven, the ideal realm divinely intended for king David to build up, but in respect to which himself, but more particularly his successors on the throne, had made a shocking failure.

The verses following (6-9) present in a strain of allegory the results of Messiah's righteous and peaceful government.

6. Of commentators, most rational-

loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins. **6** ^h The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. **7** And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and

the lion shall eat straw like the ox. **8** And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the ³ cockatrice' den. **9** ⁱ They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for ^k the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.

^h Chapter 65. 25; Ezekiel 34. 25; Hosea 2. 18.

³ Or, *adder's*.—ⁱ Job 5. 23; chap. 2. 4; 35. 9.
—^k Hab. 2. 14.

ists, and some who were not, have written of these texts as if they are to be taken literally. Not one particle of interest to the cause of truth seems to be served by so understanding them. The whole is so obviously a stream of metaphors, or an allegory, that the plain thing to do is to find what rich truths are taught under such a garb. **The wolf...shall dwell**—Or, shall *sojourn*; as it were, to stay for the night or longer. The wolf in Palestine, as elsewhere, is the most uneasy, untamable, and ravenous of animals. To sojourn with the lamb, instead of devouring it, is so unnatural that it is necessary to take it as an imagined possibility, not a physical one; hence it becomes a very strong figure to represent the greatest moral change in nature. And this is true of all the other cases in these verses. Wood's Bible Animals points out that while a *wolf* attacks sheepfolds, a *leopard* can follow a kid along precipices where no wolf would venture, and the *lion* will carry off oxen which neither leopard nor wolf can move. This settles the appositeness and congruity of the metaphoric material of the passage. **A little child**—He needs not to be a grown man. **Shall lead them**—Relative superiority of man over the animal world is retained.

7. Shall feed—Or, graze. **Eat straw**—"No hay is made in Palestine."—VAN LENNEP'S *Bible Lands*, p. 83. The fodder for cattle, horses, and camels in that country is straw broken and mashed at the threshing floors. This is fed in connexion with barley. (Van Lennep.) The doctrine allegorized here cannot safely be carried (as by Gill and others) beyond the general one of the greatest possible moral change wrought by Messiah's reign.

8. To express the doctrine still more strongly, venomous serpents are represented as innoxious. **The asp**—"This is thought to be the cobra."—TRISTRAM'S *Natural History of the Bible*. Precise discrimination of the serpent species is, however, of no importance to exegesis here. **Cockatrice**—The viper *Daboia*. (Tristram.) **Sucking...weaned child**—The point is, quite the most helpless are safe among most deadly reptiles.

Stronger figures could scarcely be used, though drawn from the entire field of nature, to express the wonderful effects of the coming great moral changes under the true Davidic-Messianic rule.

9. The figures are changed almost to literal terms. Still the tropical peculiarity lingers. **They**—Indefinitely, men in general. **Shall not hurt**—Literally, *shall do no evil*; shall not deal corruptly. **In all my holy mountain**—The holy land of the redeemed earth. There shall be no more a rapacious world-empire (lion, bear, leopard, Dan. vii, 4-7,) to annoy the Church struggling into life, and working up its energies through the infused spirit of the Messiah. **Knowledge**—True religion shall fill the earth. **The sea**—Literally, the *depths of the sea*; as waters fill the deep sea basins. For illustrating the effects and the prevalence of the effects of Messiah's reign, more ample statement is not needed. The prophecy is in our day being fulfilled, though its complete fulfilment requires still most wonderful moral changes.

10. The reign of the Messiah (verses 1-5) and its peaceful effects, (6-9,) are already described. Other points now arise. The first is, the extensiveness of his reign. **In that day**—The fu-

10 ¹And in that day ^mthere shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the ⁿGentiles seek: and ^ohis rest shall be ^qglorious. 11 And it shall come to pass ^pin that day, *that* the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left, ^rfrom Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from

Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. 12 And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together ^sthe dispersed of Judah from the four ^tcorners of the earth. 13 ^uThe envy also of Ephraim shall depart, and the adversaries of Judah shall be cut off: Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Ju-

¹ Chap. 2. 11.—^m Verse 1; Rom. 15. 12.—ⁿ Rom. 15. 10.—^o Heb. 4. 1.—^q Heb. *glory*.—^p Chap. 2. 11.

^q Zech. 10. 10.—^r John 7. 35; James 1.1.—^s Heb. *wings*.—^t Jer. 3. 18; Ezek. 37. 16, 17, 22; Hosea 1. 11.

ture time of the establishment of his reign. **A root of Jesse**—Hebrew, *the root-sprout of Jesse*. A scion of that ancient and honourable family, still flourishing to amazing growth. **An ensign**—He shall serve for a standard. **Of the people**—That is, Gentile peoples, as the definition in the other parallel member shows. He will, in his own person and doctrine, be as it were the stationary banner on Mount Zion, waving to all nations to rally under his sway. Restrictions are removed. The proud old tree of earthly Davidic sovereignty is hewn down, and only the living root has survived, but this will increase in strength to a tree overspreading all peoples. It will be sought unto. **And his rest shall be glorious**—Literally, *his resting place shall be glory*. Like Jehovah's "rest" in the temple, with *shechinah* hovering with celestial glory over the ark of the covenant. Numbers x, 33. The point settled here is the universality of the spread of the Gospel. The original restriction was but to be the means for the unlimited extension of Messiah's blessed fulness.

11, 12. The next point is, how this shall be, with Israel scattered to the four winds before Messiah comes. **Come to pass in that day**—Some future time, as in last verse. **Shall... again... the second time**—To what does this refer? Literally, *the Lord shall add his hand a second time to recover*. At no time before have his people been signally recovered, or redeemed, as the verb properly means, save in their recovery from Egyptian bondage. The prophet foretells a redemption here, as a second re-

demption, and that, most seemingly and suitably, the counterpart of the Egyptian. As he once purchased or delivered Israel out of Egypt, so will he redeem it, recreate it, as from the seed-corn of the remnant out of all the regions here mentioned. **From Assyria...Egypt**—These are first named as the chief world-powers of Isaiah's time. Appended to these are:—1. **Pathros**—Commonly agreed to be Upper Egypt, as distinguished from Mizraim, or more strictly, Lower Egypt. 2. **Cush**—A land still south of Upper Egypt. These are attached to Egypt in general land divisions. 3. **Elam**—Or Persia, or lands beyond the Tigris. 4. **Shinar**—Lands lying around Babylon. 5. **Hamath**—Regions to the north of the Lebanon. 6. **Islands of the sea**—The lands within and coastwise of the Mediterranean. These held appendage to the northernmost great world-power. But Israel was not scattered among these when Isaiah wrote. The description is, therefore, prophetic, not historical. Israel is, indeed, yet to be scattered, and the Gentiles, ideally under the above names, are in Messiah's time to be converted, and to be the means of Israel's recovery and redemption. So St. Paul in Rom. ix. So also our prophet in chap. vi, 11-13. **He shall set up an ensign, etc.**—The Gentiles, in consequence of the marked will of God, will at their own conversion afford all means for the reception of the dispersed Israel into Messiah's kingdom.

13. **Envy... of Ephraim shall depart, etc.**—Here the enmity once existing between the two kingdoms is selected in poetic phrase to denote all

dah shall not vex Ephraim. **14** But they shall fly upon the shoulders of the Philistines toward the west; they shall spoil ⁶them of the east together: ⁷they shall lay their hand upon Edom and Moab; ⁸and the children of Ammon ⁹shall obey them. **15** And the Lord ¹⁰shall utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea; and with his mighty

⁶ Heb. *the children of the east.*—⁷ Dan. 11. 41.—⁸ Heb. *Edom and Moab shall be the laying on of their hand.*—⁹ Heb. *the children of Ammon their obedience.*

old jealousy and envy as coming to an end. All are to be united in harmonious and happy society, and to become true subjects of Messiah. This settles the third point, namely, that the continuance of the rent in Israel is to cease in the fulness of the Messiah's time.

14. But, fourthly, how about Israel and unbrotherly tribes and nomads around? **But they**—Undivided Ephraim and Judah, now *one* under Messiah. **Shall fly**—From the land of exile, or even from Central Zion, whither in spiritual union they have in figure betaken themselves. **Upon the shoulders of the Philistines toward the west**—"Shoulders"—either hills fronting the Philistine plain, or frontier regions from Zion as the starting-point for activity seaward. **Spoil them of the east**—Symbolical words taken from David's conquests over Ishmaelites, Midianites, etc.; and the same symbols apply as over **Edom, Moab, and Ammon.** Spiritual conquests alone are intended. 2 Sam. viii, 11, 19. The prophet figures here the supremacy of the future spiritually united Israel and Judah over all its old enemies. As to geographical notes, Edom lay south of Judah, between the Dead and the Red seas; Moab, east of the Dead Sea and lower Jordan; Ammon, east of Judea, between the Jabbok and the Arnon, and Philistia in the southwest, on the Mediterranean.

15, 16. The wonders which Jehovah wrought for Israel in his escape from Egypt, and will yet work in his deliverances from Assyria, are to be repeated essentially, but in the spiritual sense, in behalf of the dispersed of

wind shall he shake his hand over the river, and shall smite it in the seven streams, ¹¹and make *men* go over ¹²dryshod. **16** And ¹³there shall be a highway for the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria; ¹⁴like as it was to Israel in the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt.

¹¹ Chapter 60. 14.—¹² Zechariah 10. 11.—¹³ Revelation 16. 12.—¹⁴ Hebrew, *in shoes.*—¹⁵ Chapter 19. 23.—¹⁶ Exodus 14. 29; chapter 31. 10; 63. 12, 13.

Israel, or at least the Israel that shall return to Jehovah in those lands. The whole description is exaltedly figurative and the poetry wonderful, considering the small physical scope from within which the terms and vocables are drawn as signs of the prophet's overflowing conceptions. **And the Lord shall utterly destroy**—Shall lay the ban upon the Sea of Egypt:—that which lies between Egypt and Arabia, the Gulf of Suez or the Red Sea, which the children of Israel passed. Jehovah smites it with the ban; he makes it dry again for passage to converted ones out of Egypt toward Zion. **With his mighty wind**—With his heated, glowing breath, and wave of hand, as employing mediate agency over the Euphrates. Observe the attention, as before, first on the two great world-kingsdoms. **Smite it in the seven streams**—Jehovah splinters the great river into seven, or an indefinite number of shallow streams to become, through God's heated air, dry wadys for an unobstructed highway to the saints from Assyria, as well as in old time there was to God's typical people out of Egypt. In these terms no literal history is asserted for the future Messianic people, but merely a gradual disappearing of the whole circle of heathendom comes to pass, and tropically the Holy Land is the centre of Messiah's kingdom.

CHAPTER XII.

Now the scene shifts, and the prophet addresses the ingathered redeemed ones. Messiah receives joyful homage, as did Jehovah at the Red Sea

CHAPTER XII.

AND ^ain that day thou shalt say, O Lord, I will praise thee: though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me. **2** Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the Lord ^bJEHOVAH is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation. **3** Therefore with joy shall ye draw ^cwa-

ter out of the wells of salvation. **4** And in that day shall ye say, ^dPraise the Lord, ^ecall upon his name, ^fdeclare his doings among the people, make mention that his ^gname is exalted. **5** Sing unto the Lord; for he hath done excellent things: this is known in all the earth. **6** ^hCry out and shout, thou ⁱinhabitant of Zion: for great is ^kthe Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee.

^a Chap. 2. 11; 11. 10, 11, 16; 14. 3; 27. 1; Zech. 14. 9, 20.—^b Psa. 83. 18.—^c Exod. 15. 2; Psa. 118. 14.—^d John 4. 10, 14; 7. 37, 38.—^e 1 Chr. 16. 8; Psa. 105. 1.

¹ Or, *proclaim his name*.—^f Psa. 145. 4-6.—^g Psa. 34. 3.—^h Exod. 15. 1, 21; Psa. 68. 32; 98. 1.—ⁱ Chap. 54. 1; Zeph. 3. 14.—² Heb. *inhabitant*.—^k Psa. 71. 22; 89. 18; ch. 41. 14, 16.

redemption and deliverance. **I will praise thee**—Literally, *confess unto thee*. **Thou wast angry**—The contrast from a sense of wrath to that of peace and joy is noticed. Anger now is passed, and comfort from Jehovah is experienced.

2. I will...not be afraid—The reason given is, **The Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song**. In the Hebrew it is, *Jah Jehovah*. The word "Jah" is prefixed to intensify, to denote the extraordinary. It is but a fragment of Jehovah, and, according to Fürst, simply serves this office for it. Used again by Isaiah only at chapter xxvi, 4. The meaning is, *The very great Jehovah is my song*. Exod. vi, 3.

3. Draw water—What gift so welcome, so precious, after experience in the Desert of Sinai? **Wells of salvation**—The inexhaustible riches of the Holy Spirit—so the figure clearly means; so the ancient Jews applied it. Water, wells of water, or fountains, rivers, are terms indisputably used in the Old Testament for the satisfying gifts of the Holy Spirit.

4. In that day—The wonderful day is the day of the glorious Gospel and its wholesome truths; its peace and the heaven it brings.

5. Sing unto the Lord—*Praise Jehovah by singing*, perhaps with instruments, is intended. It is the same as in Exod. xv, 1.

6. In the midst of thee—To have God's dwelling in the midst of his people, making and fulfilling his promises without diminution or failure, for evermore, is the prophet's grandest thought in this closing of his book, very appropriately called the Book of Immanuel.

PART III.

The collection of prophecies in regard to the heathen, chaps. xiii-xxiii.

INTRODUCTION.

In Jeremiah and Ezekiel, as well as in Isaiah, the prophecies in regard to the heathen are placed together by themselves. They are arranged here, possibly not in chronological order, but probably as most suitably following the cycle of Messianic prophecies contained in chapters vii-xii, where the thought is, that all kingdoms shall, in Messianic times, be embraced in the kingdom of Immanuel; and in this collection the same thought is virtually expanded. These prophecies, relating to Immanuel, were given in the period when the great world-kings, especially the Assyrian, were the occasion of alarm for the fate of Israel and Judah; and minor heathen kingdoms, having no love for these, were like to follow up advantages in their own interest against them. Though arranged in a series, the prophecies are really independent, yet the foregoing prophecy in chapters vii-xii forms a fundamental unity and substance for them all.

The first in the series is embraced in chapters xiii, 1-xiv, 27.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE ORACLE CONCERNING THE BABYLONIANS, AND THE NATIONS SUCCESSIVE TO THEM.

Some of these prophecies exhibit a peculiar variety of style, and not a few of the German critics see in this a reason for Isaiah not being

CHAPTER XIII.

THE "burden of Babylon, which Isaiah the son of Amoz did see.

a Ch. 21. 1; 47. 1; Jer. ch. 50. 51.—*b* Ch. 5. 26;

their author; as if such a versatile mind, capable of dealing in every imaginable phase of poetic representation, and having throughout his writings at ready command every several kind of style and every several change of delineation, is to be ruled out of authorship for a slight change of style and diction here and there! Such a canon rigidly applied would upset confidence in the now unquestioned authorship of half the ancient and modern classics; of Horace, of Virgil, of Shakespeare, of Racine, and indefinitely of others. The same critics are put to their worst because these two chapters prophesy and treat of historic facts implying knowledge of what happened hundreds of years after the lifetime of Isaiah. With them there is no such thing as prophetic inspiration; and, of course, with them the writer here must have written during or after the events. Of all their criticisms this is the most important issue. If there cannot be prophetic foresight, then, of course, the writing is *ex eventu*. But if there be inspiration and prophetic foresight, as has been claimed by the title, the terms, and the immemorial uniform position of these writings—a position as old as the text itself—then, regardless of the assumption of varieties of phraseology, diction, syntax, and style, assumed as obvious to the delicate critical sense by one set of this school, though denied by another set of the same school—then, be it repeated, the claim that Isaiah cannot be their author fails entirely. The argument for prophetic inspiration may be waived here; it belongs to apologetic theology. Nor is it here legitimate, as the burden of proof falls upon its doubters and deniers.

There is a difficulty created by even orthodox interpreters, which needs a brief notice. It is that of finding in this prophecy its fulfilment in the immediate and complete downfall of

2 ^b Lift ye up a banner ^c upon the high mountain, exalt the voice unto them, ^d shake the hand, that they may go into

18.3; Jer. 50. 2.—*c* Jer. 51. 25.—*d* Chap. 10. 32.

Babylon, as apparently predicted; whereas Babylon was totally blotted out only in a long course of ages. The true solution of this difficulty is, that this prediction, like some others uttered by Isaiah, is *generic*, not *specific*; "not a detailed account of one event exclusively, but a prophetic picture of the fall of Babylon considered as a whole, some of the traits being taken from the first and some from the last stage of the fatal process, while others are indefinite or common to all. The same idea may be otherwise expressed by saying, that the king of Babylon whose fall is here predicted is neither Nebuchadnezzar nor Belshazzar, but the kings of Babylon collectively; or rather, an ideal king of Babylon, in whom the character and fate of the whole empire concentrated."—*Alexander*.

1. **The burden of Babylon**—The word *massah*, "burden," is from a verb, meaning *to lift, raise*, and impliedly *to bear*; a secondary meaning is, *to utter*: hence the noun may mean a "burden"—mental burden—a verdict, or oracular utterance; or, a declaration prophetic and menacing—a *judicial sentence upon Babylon*. See 1 Kings ix, 25. **Did see**—The whole vision was serious, substantive truth, pictorially enacted.

2. **Lift ye up a banner**—See chapters v, 26 and xi, 12, and the notes there. **Upon the high mountain**—Literally, *bald mountain*, from which the reared standard could be seen from afar, and a rally thither could be made. **Unto them**—The Medes. The Median power, with that of Persia, is to conquer Babylon. The point of time in the vision is, when Babylon is flushed with power and prosperity, and stained with crime. The Median mountainous country lay to the northeast, the Persian to the east. Cyrus, though not named, is the great instrument of God, who is now summoning.

the gates of the nobles. **3** I have commanded my sanctified ones, I have also called "my mighty ones for mine anger, even them that ^crejoice in my highness. **4** The noise of a multitude in the mountains, ^alike as of a great people; a tumultuous noise of the kingdoms of nations gathered together: the LORD of hosts mustereth the host of the battle. **5** They come from a far country, from the end of heaven, *even* the LORD, and the weapons of his indignation, to destroy the whole land.

6 Howl ye; ^efor the day of the LORD

^c Joel 3. 11.—^f Psalm 149. 2. 5. 6.—^g Heb. *the likeness of*—^h Zeph. 1. 7; Rev. 6. 17.—ⁱ Job 31. 23; Joel 1. 13.—² Or, *fall down*.—³ 1 Isa. 45. 6; chap. 21. 3.

3. My sanctified ones—Not inwardly and consciously belonging to God as designated for this work, but in God's order actually but unconsciously executing divine retribution on the Babylonian power. See Joel iii, 9, 10; Jer. xxii, 7. The Persians destroyed idolatry. They were morally much in advance of the highest civilized powers in Mesopotamia. And it is quite probable, that at this conquest of Babylon, and their settlement over that country, the great moral recoil against idolatry was made complete among the exiled Jews.

4. Noise of a multitude—No sooner summoned than aroused. Armies in the mountains gather instantly. The noise of preparation sounds afar. **In the mountains**—The Median mountains. **Kingdoms of nations**—Medes, Persians, Armenians, possibly also Parthians, if the vision be of prophetic space, not of time, which, judging from the next verse, is probable.

5. From a far country...end of heaven—A region but dimly definite to the mind, so very distant is it, extending out to the lowest horizon. The prophet sees the mustering hosts actually coming from the remotest point of sight. **The Lord...weapons...indignation**—The armies are under his guidance, and unconsciously become instruments of punishing (literally, *seizing*) **the whole land**,—Septuagint, the whole world—which means Babylonia as a symbol or type of all human opposition to divine authority. Chap. xiv, 7, 9, 16.

is at hand; ^bit shall come as a destruction from the Almighty. **7** Therefore shall all hands ^abe faint, and every man's heart shall melt: **8** And they shall be afraid: ⁱpangs and sorrows shall take hold of them: they shall be in pain as a woman that travaileth: they shall ³be amazed ⁴one at another; their faces *shall be as* ⁵flames. ■ Behold, ⁶the day of the LORD cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate; and he shall destroy ¹the sinners thereof out of it. **10** For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not

³ Hebrew, *wonder*.—⁴ Hebrew, *every man at his neighbour*.—⁵ Hebrew, *faces of the flames*.—⁶ Malachi 4. 1.—¹ Psalm 104 35; Proverbs 2. 22.

6. Howl ye—Ye Babylonians. **Day of the Lord**—See chap. ii, 12; also Joel i, 15. **At hand**—Soon to befall; also, to be of long continuance; this from the perspective nature of the prophecy. **As a destruction**—The fall of Babylon was a judgment, and was accompanied with judgments upon all thereafter through the ages under Babylonian rule. **From the Almighty**—Hebrew, *Shaddai*; most powerful, omnipotent: an epithet of Jehovah, used by the prophets only here and Ezekiel i, 24; x, 5; and Joel i, 15.

7. Be faint—Hanging down in nerveless despondency. **Shall melt**—Both clauses describe bodily effects indicating despairing mental states.

8. Afraid—Dismayed. Poetic power is manifest in the figures here used, which are to the effect that contortions from agonizing pain fall on the people; men stare at each other in helpless fright; their faces are faces of flame—red as fire.

9, 10. Day of the Lord cometh—The meaning the same as in verse 6. **Cruel**—Applied to "day," etc., and means, rather, *terrible, inexorable*; a judgment so viewed abstractly, and to human view. **Wrath...fierce anger**—Predicates also applying to "day," and characterizing it. If the preposition "with" is to be used, (which from the text is doubtful,) the sense remains the same. **Sinners**—They who in Babylon had incurred such fierce retribution. **Stars of heaven**—The Chaldeans were of note, far

give their light: the sun shall be ^mdarkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine.

11 And I will punish the world for *their* evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; "and I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible. **12** I will make a man more precious than fine

^m Chap. 24. 21, 23; Ezek. 32. 7; Joel 2. 31; 3. 15; Matt. 24. 29; Mark 13. 24; Luke 21. 25.

and near, as cultivators of astronomy; hence Isaiah's use of this illustration. **Shall not give their light**—No metaphor so vividly represents calamity as extinguishment of light. (See chap. xxxiv, 4; Matt. xxiv, 29, *et plura*.) Not Babylonians alone, but Egyptians and Phenicians gave much attention to astronomy, as evidenced by very early attempts at regulating time divisions by the solar and lunar motions and revolutions. Exod. vii, 11; Lev. xx, 27; xix, 31; Deut. xviii, 10. These passages show that astrology, which was interdicted to the Hebrews, was connected with their study of astronomy.

11, 12. Punish the world—The Babylonian world, the symbol (verse 5) of all resisting human wills and kingdoms of the earth hostile to God. Here the prophet, as afterward elsewhere, resolves his figures into literal expressions. Chapter i, 22; xi, 9.

Arrogancy—Babylon's prevailing sin. **The terrible**—Tyrants and oppressors. **Make a man more precious**—More scarce or rare than fine

gold. Than the...wedge of Ophir—

"Wedge," כֶּתֶם (*kethem*), properly means "gold"—Ophir's gold. For the probable location of "Ophir," see notes on 1 Kings ix, 28; x, 11. But the main point of the text is the scarcity of man, weak and frail, אָנוּשׁ, (*Enosh*),

and man אָדָם, (*Adam*), men of the common origin. Both words would seem to include man exhaustively. Babylon's defenders shall be so cut off that a single man will be more scarce than the finest gold. This is the common explanation. But Kay (*Bible Commentary*) hints another meaning. It is in substance this:

gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir. **13** "Therefore I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place, in the wrath of the Lord of hosts, and in ^pthe day of his fierce anger. **14** And it shall be as the chased roe, and as a sheep that no man taketh up: ^qthey shall every man turn to his own people, and flee every one into his

ⁿ Chap. 2. 17.—^o Hag. 2. 6.—^p Psal. 110. 5; Lam. 1. 12.—^q Jer. 50. 16; 51. 9.

"I will make a man," the lowly man, in comparison with the "haughty," "arrogant," "the terrible ones," of more consequence to me in caring, providing, etc., for him (Psalm viii) than the choicest gold. The lowly man, the man formed out of the dust, is the holy man of my "remnant" preserved in Babylon to be returned to Jerusalem. He shall be kept safe amid the terrible judgments upon Babylon by the army of Cyrus. This seems far-fetched, yet it has some plausibility.

13. Therefore—Rather, *because*; because of the wickedness described in verse 11. **Shake the heavens... earth shall remove**—Strong figures are now resumed; and what the darkening of the lights of heaven before expressed is here denoted by the general commotion of the frame of nature. Similar examples in the use of such figures are in 1 Sam. xxii, 8; Hab. iii, 6, 10; Rev. xx, 11.

14. It shall be—That is, Babylon shall be. **As the chased roe**—The figure is, Babylon shall be as timid and panting when seeking an escape as a "chased" gazelle. Swift enemies from the east shall play the falcon and the dogs upon her, just as does the huntsman upon the trembling gazelle in the chase. **As a sheep**—Strayed in the wilderness. **That no man taketh up**—Alone, bereft of its shepherd, exposed to wild beasts, afraid of every thing. **They shall... turn**—Literally, *Each to his people they shall turn, and each to his country they shall flee*. Babylon was a great capital whither transient trading peoples gathered. And these are probably meant here. On the fall of the imperial city, this motley mass would

own land. **15** Every one that is found shall be thrust through; and every one that is joined *unto them* shall fall by the sword. **16** Their children also shall be dashed to pieces before their eyes; their houses shall be spoiled, and their wives ravished. **17** Behold, I will stir up the Medes against them, which shall not regard

^r Psalm 137. 9; Nahum 3. 10; Zech. 14. 2. — ^s Chapter 21. 2; Jeremiah 51. 11, 28; Daniel

scatter in wildest flight. Those who remained would be treated as described in the next verse.

16. Their children—Whose children? Either those of foreigners, or of foreigners and natives, according as slaughter was seen to be restricted or general. It was likely to be general, in which case all children are to be slain, every house despoiled, and every woman ravished.

17. Will stir up the Medes against them—That is, "I am he who causeth to arouse as out of sleep," etc. The Hiphil participle is used of a verb having, according to Gesenius, three, according to Fürst, six, several sets of meanings, of which one set chiefly uses the Hiphil with the above characterizing idea. Compare Zech. ix, 13; Song of Solomon ii, 7; Isaiah x, 26. The "Medes" are here for the first time mentioned by name, and are alone mentioned, as they were the chief nation to be used, with Persia, in overthrowing Babylon. They had been subject to Assyria till B. C. 708 or 703, or B. C. 650, according to Rawlinson, when they threw off the yoke and became a federation of small kingdoms in their country of mountains and valleys situated east of old Assyria, south of Armenia and the Caspian Sea, and north of Persia, from which they were separated by the desert running out southwest from near the ancient Aryan seats. They had no friendship for their old masters of Mesopotamia. Prosperity and power came to them after they became independent, and were finally organized under one monarchy, and so on till Cyaxares becomes, at length, the probable true founder of the Median dynasty, B. C. 633, and the one who appears to begin what is the

silver; and *as for* gold, they shall not delight in it. **18** Their bows also shall dash the young men to pieces; and they shall have no pity on the fruit of the womb; their eye shall not spare children.

19 And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew

5. 28, 31. — ^t Chapter 14. 4, 22. — ⁶ Hebrew, *as the overthrowing*.

truly authentic history of the Medes. See SMITH'S *Dictionary of the Bible*; SMITH'S *History of the World*; RAWLINSON'S *Five Great Monarchies*; RAWLINSON'S *Herodotus*; LENORMANT'S *Manuscript Ancient History*, etc. In the final taking of Babylon the Median was chief over the Persian element of the instrumentality, (namely, Cyrus,) because it was really the chief power before Persia was connected with it as an empire. Hence the "Medes" constituted the chief foreseen figure with the prophet in the predicted event of the overthrow of the Babylonian power. **Shall not regard silver**—Was this a national characteristic? Xenophon (*Cyropædia*) makes Cyrus say to the Medes that they did not join him from a desire of (*χρημάτων*) money.

18. Their bows—Of very ancient use, generally made of wood, in a few instances of brass. Persian archers are spoken of with applause in profane history. See also chap. xxii, 3, 6, and Jer. xlix, 35, and 1. 9, 14, 29, 42. **No pity**—Anciently, if the conqueror came in revenge of former wrongs it was the law of war to spare neither men, women, nor children. (On the subject of ancient war, see JAHN'S *Hebrew Archaeology*.)

19. Babylon... shall be as... Gomorrah—With such inhuman work of the foe, Babylon becomes like Elohim's overthrowing judgment upon Sodom and Gomorrah. **Glory of kingdoms**—Because it became the centre of many conquered realms. **Beauty of the Chaldees' excellency**—Babylon was the seat of the ancient Chaldean culture, in which respect writers of antiquity all concur in stating she was always superior to Nineveh. All Assyrian learning and

"Sodom and Gomorrah. **20** "It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there. **21** "But "wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their

houses shall be full of "doleful creatures; and "owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there. **22** And "the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their desolate "houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces: "and her time is near to come, and her days shall not be prolonged.

^a Gen. 19. 24, 25; Deut. 29. 23; Jer. 49. 18; 50. 40.—ⁿ Jer. 50. 3, 39; 51. 29, 32.—^w Chap. 34. 11-15; Rev. 18. 2.

⁷ Heb. *Ziim*.—⁸ Heb. *Ochim*.—⁹ Or. *ostriches*. Heb. *daughters of the owl*.—¹⁰ Heb. *lin*.—¹¹ Or. *palaces*.—^a Jer. 51. 33.

science came to them from Chaldea; but in plastic arts the Chaldeans were behind their northern neighbours. In Assyria was the birthplace of the great school of ancient art which exercised so decisive an influence on the opening period of the Grecian school. (*Lenormant*.)

20, 21. Never be inhabited —

This is a statement of *certainty* of the event, not its nearness, not its occurrence immediately after the capture by Cyrus. It did not become a perfect desert for five hundred years. The prophecy is seen in space, not in definite time. **Neither . . . pitch tent**

there—The Arabian is mentioned as being the nomad of the ages past, just as he is now. It is stated by travellers that superstition or dread of evil spirits operates to make this statement still true. Some of them say that the Bedouins still have a superstitious fear of lodging near the ruins of Babylon. **Wild beasts**—*Tizyim*,

desert animals indefinitely, or whatever inhabits dry and desolate situations. Lexicographers find much difficulty in settling the import of the word. **Owls**—Or, literally, *daughters of screaming*. Ostriches are intended, as some think, but that is doubtful.

Satyrs—Literally, *shaggy creatures*; perhaps a species of goat, though Tristram (*Natural History of the Bible*, page 132,) thinks the "goat-god" of Egypt, with which the children of Israel became acquainted in Egypt, furnished the popular myth of the satyr—half goat and half man—and poetically the prophet Isaiah painted horrible desert places with this ideal creature. Nevertheless, he countenances another interpretation of the word, namely, a creature of the dog-faced baboon, also an object of wor-

ship with the Egyptians, as shown from their monuments, like to the mocko, or *maccacus Arabacus*, a baboon which is now disseminated from Central Africa as far north as to the confluence of the Tigris and the Euphrates.

It is observable that our Lord, in Matt. xii, 43, recognised the sentiment, current even in his day, that the desert is the abode of demons or unclean spirits. Virgil also calls them *saltantes satyros*, dancing satyrs. The Yezides of Syria and Mesopotamia are a sect of devil worshippers. Joseph Wolf, missionary, and traveller to Bokhara, saw pilgrims of this sect upon the ruins of Babylon performing strange and horrid rites by moonlight, dancing and howling, and reminding him of this passage. (*Delitzsch*.)

22. Beasts of the islands—See note on chapter xi, 11. Literally, the first idea is islands, then coasts, and, on further advance of the conception, some desolate place. **Shall cry**—As in responsive wailing, like that of jackals. **Dragons**—The word may mean serpents, and when the idea is fitted to the conditions of the place, it probably does mean this. See further in notes on Job vii, 12; xxx, 29. No man ever excelled Isaiah* in painting deep, strong, tragic, thrilling words into a scene. Compare chap. x, 28-32.

That Cyrus, at the head of the great Medo-Persian army, is seen in the foreground as the commencing agency of this terrific desolation, there can be no doubt. Unbelievers admit this. But the point of chief importance in this prediction is, the thorough eventual desolation of Babylon. For hundreds of years the prophecy has been completely fulfilled. Travellers furnish a description quite well enough

CHAPTER XIV.

FOR the LORD ^a will have mercy on Jacob, and ^b will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land: ^c and the strangers shall be joined with them, and they shall cleave to the house of Jacob. **2** And the people shall take them, ^d and bring them to their place: and the house of Israel shall possess them

^a Psalm 103. 13. — ^b Zech. 1. 17; 2. 12. — ^c Chap. 60. 4, 5, 10; Eph. 2. 12, 13.

answering to a state of things presented in the prediction. It answers little for an objection to this, even if here and there, on the large tract once occupied by the great city, a miserable village or larger town like Hillah has now and then sprung up, for the main truth stands; and as to Hillah, a town of ten thousand inhabitants, (NEWMAN'S *Babylon and Nineveh*.) Rawlinson is authority for doubt whether it stands on any part of the ancient site. Be it that it does so stand, it occupies but a speck in the area of two hundred square miles or more of old Babylon. The prophet's vision had "its appointed time;" but at the end it spake, and did not lie: it came and tarried not. Hab. ii, 3.

CHAPTER XIV.

As already stated, this chapter, in great part if not in the whole of it, is but a continuation of the preceding. The closing thought there coheres especially with that of the first three verses here, namely, that providential dealing in this world is primarily with reference to God's Church on earth. This judgment on Babylon was to prepare the way for Israel's becoming the centre of the future of the kingdom of God on earth. Delitzsch says, we have in a nutshell the whole of chapters xl to lvi in verses one and two of this chapter.

1. For—The word is a sign of a continued drift of thought from the foregoing chapter. **The Lord will have mercy**—In accordance with a perpetual covenant. It was a mercy to punish with captivity. The discipline was needed. **On Jacob**—Jacob and Israel are terms collective of the spiritual people—Jews purified

in the land of the LORD for servants and handmaids: and they shall take them captives, ^e whose captives they were; and they shall rule over their oppressors.

3 And it shall come to pass in the day that the LORD shall give thee rest from thy sorrow, and from thy fear, and from the hard bondage wherein thou wast

^d Chap. 49. 22; 60. 9; 66. 20. — ^e 1 Heb. *that had taken them captives*. — ^e Chap. 60. 14.

through their afflictions in Babylon. Such carried the seeds of their religion with them, which grew to fruitage. Thus the Lord has mercy on them and rechooses them. **Strangers shall be joined with them**—Proselytes in Babylon to the true religion. In like manner, from Esther viii, 17, we learn that "many of the people of the land became Jews," as the effect of evidences that God had mercy on them and chose them. Many probably accompanied them back to their land.

2. And the people—Literally, *peoples*; they of Babylon; heathen turned friends; Cyrus and authorities under him. **Bring them to their place**—They shall attend them to the land of Judea. **The house of Israel**—The Jews. **Possess them**—As converts from heathenism. **In the land of the Lord**—In the low sense, this means in Judea. But the prophecy sweeps, as usual, into the times of the Messiah, the spiritual realm of the Church. **Take them captives**—Into the true religion. **Shall rule over their oppressors**—Under laws and truths of the Messiah's kingdom. There are here predicted exchanged conditions, external and internal. The chosen people and the other peoples change places, the Jews to their own land, with heathen in a willing sense subject to them; but the full accomplishment of the prophecy is to be fulfilled when the Church of Christ shall become prevalent in the earth.

3, 4. The state of deliverance and rest expressed in the third verse is intensified by the contrast of exchanged positions between recovered Israel and the fallen oppressor, who poetically represents the whole series of

made to serve, **4** That thou shalt take up this ²proverb against the king of Babylon, and say, How hath the oppressor ceased, the ³golden city ⁵ceased! **5** The Lord hath broken ^bthe staff of the wicked, and the sceptre of the rulers. **6** He who smote the people in wrath with ⁴a continual stroke, he that

ruled the nations in anger, is persecuted, and none hindereth. **7** The whole earth is at rest, and is quiet: they break forth into singing. **8** ¹Yea, the fir trees rejoice at thee, and the cedars of Lebanon, saying, Since thou art laid down, no feller is come up against us. **9** ^{k 5}Hell from beneath is moved for thee to meet

^f Chap. 13. 19; Hab. 2. 6.—² Or, taunting speech.—³ Or, *erectress of gold*.—^g Rev. 18. 16.—^h Psa. 125. 3.

⁴ Hebrew, *a stroke without removing*.—ⁱ Chap. 55. 12; Ezek. 31. 16.—^k Ezek. 32. 21.—⁵ Or, the grave.

the oppressors of Israel in that empire of the east, now crushed and ruined forever. **Thou shalt take up this proverb**—Rather, *This song*. The meaning is, Thou shalt raise in a musical sense, including the ideas of commencement, utterance, and loudness. “Proverb,” (*mashal*), a word variously rendered; in xxiv, 3, a parable; in Ezek. xii, 23, a proverb; in Joel ii, 17, a song of derision; in Ezek. xvii, 2, a symbolical discourse, etc.; in Psa. lxi, 12, a by-word. Here the tenor of discourse requires its meaning to be a *derisive song* or *discourse*.

Golden city—From מְדִינָה (*madhe-*

bah), a word formed in the manner of a Hiphil participle from זָהַב, (*zâhab*), the first radical interchanged with its cognate **7**, (*daleth*), and its own proper meaning, therefore, becomes *gold maker*, or *gold exacter*, all which terminates tropically in the feminine abstract idea of oppression: *How hath oppressor and oppression ceased!*

5. Staff...wicked—This means the imperial power of Babylon. In this verse is apparently the answer to the exclamation of the preceding verse. **Rulers**—Who claimed absolute dominion over all minor kingdoms of the East.

6. The oldest and the latest writers, with few exceptions, make this verse descriptive of the Babylonian tyranny. **He who smote the people**—Nebuchadnezzar, no doubt, the loftiest king of Babylon, who “smote” not only the Jews, but other nations contiguous to his own territory. **Continual stroke**—Never intermitted. The tyrant’s sceptre smote nations with incessant blows and persecution. The phrase, **ruled the nations in anger**,

is persecuted, and none hindereth, is better rendered: *Subdued nations in anger with a pursuit unrestrained*. The expression refers to Babylonian tyranny, yielding to no pity, nor restraint of conscience.

7, 8. Earth is at rest—Better, *Hath gone into rest*. **Is quiet**—*Has become quiet*. The verbs are inchoatively past. **Break forth into singing**—There being no subject to the verb, great generality is given to the rejoicing. **Yea, the fir trees**, etc.—Indeed, cypress and cedar join the chorus. By these, some suppose the usual symbols for rulers, leaders, generals, etc., are intended. Now that they are safe from an all-crushing opposer, they too rejoice. But a better sense is, that firs and cedars are conspicuous parts of the one great scenery, or picture, representing all nature as rejoicing. These almost imperishable timbers were used by the tyrants for ornamental building, for siege apparatus, for fleets and ordinary ships, and they also share the general joy. Tristram, (*Nat. Hist. Bible*), regards the “fir” of the Bible to be the Aleppo pine, and for strength and durability to be only inferior to the cedar of Lebanon.

9. While it is all quiet on the earth, it is all excitement in the regions below. The bold personification goes on, but in the world invisible, and a good reading of this verse is as follows: **Hell from beneath**—Or, *The kingdom of the dead below, is all in an uproar on account of thee, to meet thee at thy coming; it stirreth up the shades for thee, all the he-goats of the earth; it raiseth up from their throne-seats all the kings of the nations.* **Hell**—On this word see notes on chapter v, 14. There is something awfully grand and fearful

thee at thy coming: it stirreth up the dead for thee, *even* all the "chief ones of the earth; it hath raised up from their thrones all the kings of the nations. 10 All they shall speak and say unto thee, 'Art thou also become weak as we? art thou become like unto us? 11 Thy

6 Heb. *leaders*, or, *great goats*.—l Psa. 49.

in the sheol, the underworld of the Hebrews, the *hades* of the New Testament, and the "hell" of the English Old Testament: an immense subterranean kingdom. (Isa. xiv, 9; Jer. v, 14; Job xxvi, 6,) thickly dark, (Job x, 21, 22,) deeply gullied, (Prov. ix, 19,) closed with strong gates, (Isa. xxxviii, 10,) and a place whence there is no escape, (Job vii, 9, 10; Luke xvi, 26;) all which passages, too, describe the popular conceptions of the Hebrews and Jews poetically embellished, as well as express what to the Hebrews contained an indisputable doctrine, namely, that of life after death. **Stirreth up the dead**—The "dead"—Hebrew, **רִפְּאִים**,

rephaim—rendered, in chap. xxvi, 14, "deceased;" in Deut. ii, 11 and iii, 11, *giants*; (so the Septuagint and Vulgate;) either from being long time dead, or because shades or spectres may be conceived as actually larger than living men. **Chief ones of the earth**—Literally, *he-goats*; bellwethers, leaders. Chap. iii, 6; Zech. x, 3. **Their thrones**—The personification retains for the shadowy souls of the great their relative positions, even in the underworld.

10. **Shall speak**—The scene is as if, before his coming, they stood in dread; but his approach revealing his weakness, they become bolder, and venture the expression, on his advance toward them, "Thou art weak as we." Delitzsch is of opinion that this is all the *shades* say; that what follows does not belong to them. And on the ground that *surprise* naturally, after an expressive burst, says but little, this is probably true.

11. If so, the triumphal elegiac song begun at verse 4 is here resumed; strong ethical sentiment, not thoughts of propriety as to condition or place, being dominant with the restored

pomp is brought down to the grave, and the noise of thy viols: the worm is spread under thee, and the worms cover thee. 12 "How art thou fallen from heaven, 'O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the na-

6, 14; 82, 6, 7.—m Ch. 34, 4.—7 Or, *O daystar*.

Jews, the chief actors in this scene. **Thy pomp**—Thy pride. **Down to the grave**—To the underworld. Ver. 9. **Thy viols**—The same word is in chap. v, 12, where see note. They are now a poor accompaniment to downcast pomp. **The worm**—The idea is, as Kay puts it, "Beneath thee is spread the maggot for thy couch, and for coverlet is spread the worm," not the *vermilion* derived from it. Lam. iv, 5. The original word for "worm" denotes the worm which gnaws grapes and other plants; (Deut. xxviii, 39; Jonah iv, 7;) also corpses, (Isaiah lxvi, 24; xiv, 11;) and is, according to Fürst, the *coccus* worm, from which the scarlet or vermilion colour is produced. When used for the latter, as in several places in Leviticus, the adjunct word, **שָׁנִי**, (*shani*), the *light-giving*, is used with it. But both functions of this insect may be supposed to be here employed in poetic association in contrast.

12. **Fallen from heaven**—A new image is now introduced, but felicitously appropriate, on account of the early date of Babylonian culture, reaching into far primeval times, and of a predominant astrological character. **From heaven**—That is, from the sky. **Lucifer, son of the morning**—The epithet "Lucifer," coupled with a phrase which defines it, is from a verb which means to shine, to give forth, to radiate; hence its proper meaning is light-bearer, radiant one, son of the morning dawn, so called, probably, in virtue of Babylon's having, from ages immemorial, shone forth in the dawn of the world's history with surprising lustre, first in culture as the world's teacher, then in perverted power. **Cut down to the ground**—Literally, *hewn down*. As if this Babel-power were the impersonation of the impurest idolatry, whose

tions! **13** For thou hast said in thine heart, "I will ascend into heaven," I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, ^p in the sides of the north: **14** I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; ^q I will be like the Most High. **15** Yet thou ^r shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit. **16** They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, *and* consider thee, *saying*, "Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms? **17** *That* made the world

as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof; *that* ^s opened not the house of his prisoners? **18** All the kings of the nations, *even* all of them, lie in glory, every one in his own house. **19** But thou art cast out of thy grave like an abominable branch, *and as* the raiment of those that are slain, thrust through with a sword, that go down to the stones of the pit; as a carcass trodden under feet. **20** Thou shalt not be joined with them in burial, because thou hast destroyed thy land, *and* slain thy people: 'the seed of evil doers shall

ⁿ Matt. 11. 23. — ^o Dan. 8. 10. — ^p Psal. 48. 2. — ^q Chap. 47. 8; 2 Thess. 2. 4. — ^r Matt. 11. 23. — ^s Psal. 52. 7; Jer. 51. 20, 23.

⁸ Or, *did not let his prisoners loose homeward?* — ^t Job 18. 19; Psalm 21. 14; 37. 23; 109. 13.

asherah, or groves, need an utter cutting up.

13. Ascend into heaven—Or, *I will climb the heaven*. Perhaps an allusion to the old time tower of Babel. Gen. xi, 4. **Above the stars of God**—The Babylonians connected the several constellations with minor kingdoms over which they claimed dominion. **Mount of the congregation**—Two interpretations have been given to these words. One is, that the mountains of Jerusalem are meant, and that the great eastern world-kingdom strove long to make there its dominion complete. The other is, a reputed widespread eastern notion of a very high mountain in the far north, where gods were believed to reside, as in northern Greece they were thought to have their abode on Mount Olympus. The one makes the words to come as the prophet's own; the other, as quoted (not endorsed) by the prophet as from the king's mouth. The latter accords with facts of the Eastern theology as found in the old Zend books, and may be the true explanation. And it more easily explains the remaining words of the verse.

14. Heights of the clouds—The simplest sense of the words is doubtless their true meaning. To climb above the highest clouds is an expression of the highest ambition and arrogance. **Like the Most High**—This completes the climax. The wall sculptures of Assyria show, it is said, symbols of deity assigned to kings.

15. Down to hell—To hades, as in Matt. xi, 23. **To the sides**—To the recesses—the side burial places. The image is taken from the shelves and recesses of sepulchres.

16, 17. The scene is now changed from sheol to earth; from a shadowy personage to an unburied corpse. **Look upon...consider thee**—Intently examine thee as some strange sight. **Is this the man**—Hardly a jibe, as some think, but a serious reflection on man's feebleness. **Made the earth to tremble**—By his former power and tyranny. But now how fallen! **Made the world as a wilderness**—The world which would otherwise have been fruitful and habitable. **Opened not the house**—Set not his captives free to go homeward.

18. All...kings...lie in glory—This is the ordinary fact; and it is a great mark of dishonour not to be buried, even for a private person, (1 Kings xiii, 22,) and how much more for a sovereign. 2 Chron. xxi, 20; xxxiv, 24. The language is not that of derision, but of astonishment.

19. Cast out of thy grave—A neglected carcass, far from thy grandly-built sepulchre. How horrible the contrast in this case! **Abominable branch**—A shoot or branch cut off as an abhorred thing; cast away for burning. **Stones of the pit**—A place of burial either excavated or built up with stones. Even common soldiers, when slain, were not denied this.

20. Shalt not be joined with them—Not even with the slain herd of men

never be renowned. **21** Prepare slaughter for his children^a for the iniquity of their fathers; that they do not rise, nor possess the land, nor fill the face of the world with cities. **22** For I will rise up against them, saith the LORD of hosts, and cut off from Babylon^a the name, and^a remnant, ^aand son, and nephew, saith the LORD. **23**^a I will also make it a possession for the

bittern, and pools of water: and I will sweep it with the besom of destruction, saith the LORD of hosts.

24^a The LORD of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand: **25** That I will break the Assyrian in my land, and upon my mountains tread him under foot: then shall^a his yoke depart

^a Exod. 20. 5; Matt. 23. 35.—^v Prov. 10. 7; Jer. 51. 62. —^w 1 Kings 14. 10.

^a Job 18. 19.—^v Chap. 34. 11; Zeph. 2. 14.—^z Exod. 17. 16.—^a Chap. 10. 27.

who have a decent burial. **Hast destroyed thy land**, etc.—To the Oriental such a judgment was the hardest conceivable; but in this case it is pronounced deserved.

21. Prepare slaughter for his children—Such is the impulse of inexorable sentiment with the Oriental to this day; and such, too, the reasons for it as are here given. In this case the **iniquity of their fathers** was judicially visited upon their children. This is considered as prophetically addressed to the Medes, if to any people in particular.

22, 23. I will rise up against—Hitherto the prophet had spoken in his own name, though not by his own authority; but now he speaks in the name of Jehovah, intimating not human agency merely, but the Lord's also, as concerned in Babylon's destruction. **Cut off...name...remnant...son, and nephew**—Every

trace of the old empire is to go out of existence. This was literally fulfilled through Cyrus and his successors of the Medo-Persian empire. And finally the population was swept away, and the city was exterminated; so hedges-hogs took the place vacated by men, and marshes the place of palaces.

24, 25. A change is here made from the prophetic scene in the distance, to a nearer view; to that of the Assyrian power with which Judah is more or less to be concerned for a hundred or more years before reaching the Babylonian era. This is done either to make the events predicted of Assyria accredit those predicted of Babylon, or to assure the prophet's own generation of Jews that God is as interested to protect them from Assyria as he is to deliver the coming generations from Babylon. **I have sworn**—To this God's oath is interposed. **I will break the Assyrian**—To Isaiah this event is quite in the near future, and Sennacherib is the prominent sufferer. **In my land**—So claimed Lev. xxv. 23. **Immanuel's land**, chap. viii. 8. **My mountains**—Chap. xlix. 11, lxv. 9. **Yoke...burden**—Same as in chap. ix. 4; x. 27. In this land and upon these mountains Assyria virtually fell to pieces for a season, so far forth as Jerusalem was concerned, in the destruction of Sennacherib's army. See the vision of this event in chapter x. 33, 34. If further words be necessary as to the allusion again to Assyria, and just in this place, they may be to this effect: The fate of both Assyria and Babylon were, in the absolute sense, in far future to Isaiah. The prophecy against Assyria had, in partial form, already gone forth. The foregoing



BITTERN.

from off them, and his burden depart from off their shoulders. **26** This is the purpose that is purposed upon the whole earth: and this is the hand that is stretched out upon all the nations. **27** For the Lord of hosts hath^b purposed, and who shall disannul it? and his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back? **28** In the year that^c king Ahaz died was this burden.

^b 2 Chron. 20. 6; Job 9. 12; 23. 13; Psa. 33. 11; Prov. 19. 21; 21. 30; chap. 43. 13; Dan. 4. 31, 35.

prophecy against Babylon is complete. As a pledge of its fulfilment the matter of these two verses is placed here, in accordance with assurances common to the prophets, as appears in Jer. i. 18, "Behold, I will punish the king of Babylon and his land, as I have punished the king of Assyria." The purpose and certainty against Assyria are a pledge for the purpose and certainty against Babylon. There is another view less probable, but having plausibility, namely, that Isaiah quite survived what seemed the assured fate of Assyria, and then himself confidently appended these verses as God's pledge against Babylon, thus reaffirming predictions against Assyria formerly made.

26, 27. This is the purpose—The sense of these verses is, That the "purpose" formed against Babylon and Assyria is also formed against all peoples who deserve punishment, and it must be executed. Rules of justice control the Almighty in regard to all nations, and they cannot be changed.

AGAINST PHILISTIA, 28-32.

Properly, another chapter begins and ends with these verses. The prophet had treated fully of Babylon's downfall in the far future; then he reverted to the earlier overthrow of Assyria; and now, returning to the exigencies of his own time, he utters this note of warning to Philistia not to exult unduly in the foredoom of her old enemy. The apostrophe is to the Philistians, though uttered chiefly for the comfort of Judah.

28. The year...Ahaz died—About B.C. 726. **Burden—**An utterance, an

29 Rejoice not thou, whole Palestina, "because the rod of him that smote thee is broken: for out of the serpent's root shall come forth a cockatrice," and his fruit shall be a fiery flying serpent. **30** And the firstborn of the poor shall feed, and the needy shall lie down in safety: and I will kill thy root with famine, and he shall slay thy remnant. **31** Howl, O gate; cry, O city;

^c 2 Kings 16. 20.—^d 2 Chron. 26. 6.—⁹ Or, adder.—^e 2 Kings 19. 8.

oracle, a threatening message, a sentence denounced—in this case denounced in the year that Ahaz died.

29. Rejoice not...whole Palestina—Rather, *Philistia*, a territory in the southwest of Judah, and which the Philistines, a people from Caphtor in the Mediterranean, though of Egyptian origin, had long occupied, and from which they were never dislodged, though much of the time kept in subjection. **Because the rod... that smote thee is broken—**"The rod" is a symbol for dominion: and probably refers here to the former Jewish power. Some commentators, however, refer it to the Assyrian oppressors. **Serpent's root—**This is argued to be Uziah, the grandfather of Ahaz, who had subjected Philistia, but from which subjection she had recovered under Ahaz. **Cockatrice—**Hezekiah, who again subjected Philistia. The "root" was of the ordinary *serpent*, not over venomous; but its offspring, the basilisk, was very venomous. **And his fruit... a fiery flying serpent—**Poetically intensive of the basilisk. The warning is to Philistia not to exult because of denounced Assyria; she has yet to drink of a bitter cup from the hands of a lesser enemy—Hezekiah.

30. Firstborn of the poor—Or, sons of the poor, God's own—the lowly; here, his true people in Judah. **Feed...lie down—**The figures are from a flock of sheep—shall feed quietly, undisturbed by Philistine skirmishes. **Thy root—**Compare Amos ii, 9. **Slay thy remnant—**Make a radical destruction of thee.

31. Howl, O gate—Ye who throng

thou, whole Palestina, *art* dissolved: for there shall come from the north a smoke, and ¹⁰ none *shall be* alone in his ¹¹ appointed times. **32** What shall *one*

¹⁰ Or, he shall *not be alone*.—¹¹ Or, *assemblies*.—*f* Psa. 87. 1, 5; 102. 16.

the gates; the chief place of concourse for trials of justice, for news, and for business. The gates here are those of Philistia's fortress-towns.

Dissolved—Possibly, this word is used in allusion to another panic stricken Philistian scene, recorded in 1 Sam. xiv, 12–16. The word is well illustrated by it. **From the north a smoke**—From Judah, north and northeast. The passage, literally translated, reads: "Out of the north cometh a smoke," as of a marching column of cloud or flame; symbol of Jehovah's lead of his own to battle. **None shall be alone in his appointed times**—Most commentators now agree in the main with Lowth's rendering: "There is no straggler in his levies," or "in his appointed places." That is, all the portions of his host are at their appointed posts of duty, and reach their places of rendezvous in good time and accurate order.

32. What... answer—What answer shall be given to **the messengers of the nation**—The ambassadors sent from a nation, (*גוֹי, goi*, collection of peoples.) From what nation, what people? There is no article, and no indication as to any nation meant. It may be intended to be indefinite. Any people may send to know what is the outcome to Israel from surrounding complications, from Philistine revolts or restiveness under subjection; or from dreaded Assyrian invasions. The answer is the most important part of the passage, and that is always the same; the same now, that it was to Rabshakeh in his argument with Hezekiah's servants against trusting Jehovah, (chap. xxxvi, 4–10,) and in effect the same as this text has it, namely: *That Jehovah has founded Zion, and that in it the afflicted of his people shall seek refuge*. They shall trust in Jehovah, and

then answer the messengers of the nation? That *'the Lord hath founded Zion, and 'the poor of his people shall trust in it.*

g Zeph. 3. 12; Zech. 11. 11.—¹² Or, *betake themselves unto it*.

never be moved. This is the answer which may be given to inquiries made from any quarter.

CHAPTER XV.

In close connexion with each other, chapter xv and xvi apply to Moab. As seen from the western hills in Palestine, Moab seems a high and level table land, with a cliff wall abutting precipitately down to the eastern water edge of the Dead Sea. As seen, however, in the land itself, this wall begins to fall off some five to eight miles back from the sea. The chasm of the Arnon, running westward to the sea, divides the plain in the centre, and south of this lay Moab proper, though the nation so often occupied the northern half as well, that the whole land went by its name. Ar, in the south division, was the capital; and KIR was a strong fortification on the extreme south. Moab also shared possession of the cities north, even in the nominal region of the allotment of the tribe of Reuben. The people of Moab, unlike their neighbours, the Ammonites and the Reubenites, tilled the soil as well as raised flocks and herds. Moab was tributary to David and Solomon, but fell to Israel in the schism under Jeroboam. From the death of Ahab of Israel to the accession of Uzziah of Judah, Moab held a quasi-independent position, but, with Ammon on the north, and Edom on the south, it was then made subject to Judah, but under later kings this subjection was feeble and precarious.

The prophecy here is no doubt generic, covering the condition and character of Moab for at least two centuries. The prophecy in Jer. xlviii is a copy and an amplification of this. Because of admitted archaisms in the prophecy, interpreters generally, at the present time, allow that Isaiah may have built on the groundwork laid by

CHAPTER XV.

THE ^aburden of Moab. Because in the night ^bAr of Moab is laid waste, and ^cbrought to silence; because in the night Kir of Moab is laid waste, and brought to silence: **2** ^eHe is gone up to Bajith, and to Dibon, the high places, to weep: Moab shall howl over Nebo, and over Medeba: ^don all their heads shall be baldness, and every beard cut off. **3** In their streets they shall gird themselves with sackcloth: ^eon the

tops of their houses, and in their streets, every one shall howl, ²weeping abundantly. **4** And Heshbon shall cry, and Elealeh; their voice shall be heard even unto Jahaz: therefore the armed soldiers of Moab shall cry out; his life shall be grievous unto him. **5** ^eMy heart shall cry out for Moab; ³his fugitives shall flee unto Zoar, a ^bheifer of three years old: for ¹by the mounting up of Luhith with weeping shall they go it up; for in the way of Horonaim

^a Jer. 48. 1; Ezekiel 25. 8-11; Amos 2. 1.—
^b Num. 21. 28.—^c Or, cut off.—^d Chap. 16. 12.
^e Lev. 21. 5; chap. 3. 24; 22. 12; Jer. 47. 5;
48. 1, 37, 38; Ezek. 7. 18.—^e Jer. 48. 38.
² Heb. descending into weeping, or, coming

down with weeping.—^f Chapter 16. 9.—
^g Chapter 16. 11; Jeremiah 48. 31.—³ Or, to the borders thereof, even to Zoar, as a heifer.
—^h Chapter 16. 14; Jeremiah 48. 34.—ⁱ Jeremiah 48. 5.

an older prophet, even a hundred years previously. It required but a small modification each time to be applicable to the state Moab was in, in both Isaiah's and Jeremiah's times.

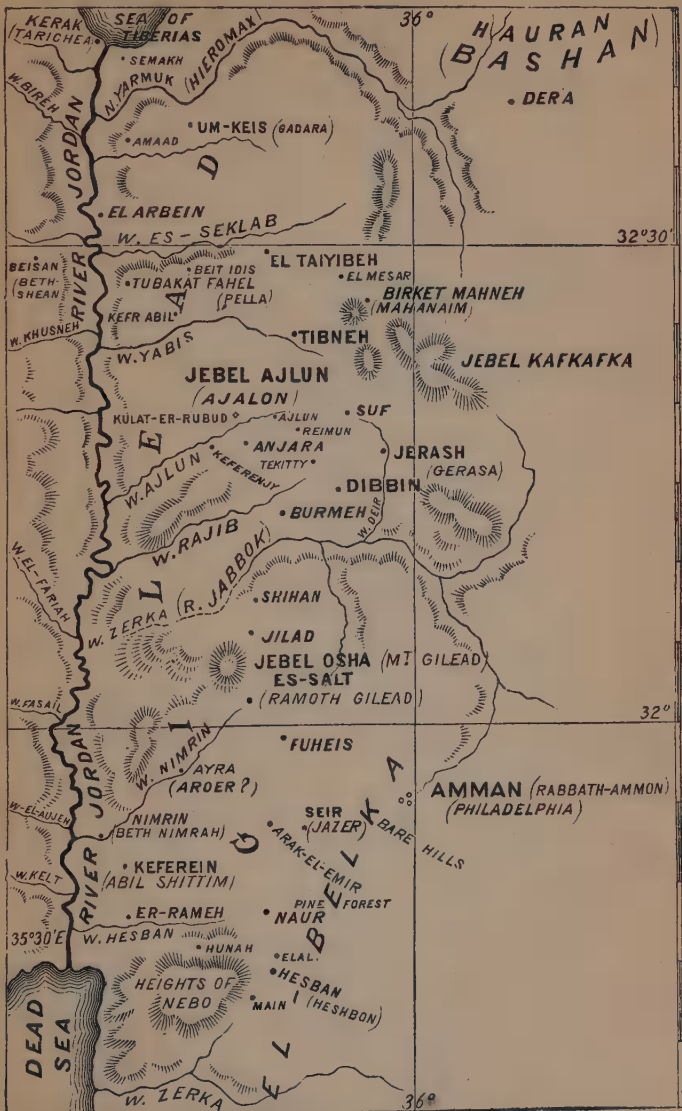
1. The burden of Moab—"Burden," here, may indicate "prophecy," at first orally uttered, afterward written up. If an old prophecy has been a basis of utterance, it is now modified and adopted as Isaiah's. See same case in Jer. xlviii, and a similar case in chap. ii, 1-5. **Because**—Hebrew, כִּי, (*ki*), elliptically, "it is that." Gesenius renders it, *verily*. **In the night...in the night**—Poetic repetition here possibly indicates a fact of frequent occurrence. As in these times in that country, so then, no doubt, towns and great encampments were occasionally overthrown in a single night by earthquakes or invading hordes. **Ar of Moab**—The city of Moab, the only city of account Moab proper had, situated south of the Arnon, not on it, though Num. xxi, 15 speaks of it as if it were at the northern border on the Arnon: this, because no other city intervened. See TRISTRAM, *Land of Moab*, p. 120. **Kir of Moab**—Now Kir-Hareseth, xvi, 7, some two miles south of Ar, according to present ruins.

2, 3. He—The collective people of Moab. **Has gone up to Bajith**—This was probably not a town, but a high place for a sanctuary. The word is so near to *Beth*—a house—as to

indicate only a temple, the house of Moab's gods. **Dibon**—Gesenius reads here, *Dibon is weeping upon the high places*. Dibon lay some fifteen miles north of the Arnon, and **Nebo** still farther north, to a point due east of the head of the Dead Sea. **Medeba** lay a few miles southeast from Nebo. Some went up to Nebo, some to Medeba, and some, through **streets** and on **tops of...houses**, all bewailing the catastrophe befalling them. **Gird...with sackcloth**—In Eastern countries to this day similar exhibits of grief are made in days of calamity.

4. Heshbon, and other cities north, and back to the south again, join in the cry. Heshbon, an ancient royal residence of the Amorites, (Num. xxi, 26, *seq.*) on falling into the hands of the Israelites, was assigned to Reuben, (Josh. xiii, 17;) then to Gad as a city of the Levites. **Jahaz**—This place would seem to have lain eastward toward the desert, as may be inferred from Num. xxi, 23, and Deut. ii, 32, for it was from there that Sihon marched down into the wilderness against the Israelite warriors who conquered him.

5. My heart shall cry out—The prophet himself enters into sympathy with the affrighted people, whose stampede is even to **Zoar**, with a terror like that of the bellowing heifer. Zoar was for long held to be at the south of Moab, or at the foot of the Dead Sea. So Josephus, Jerome, and Dr. Robinson. But more recently



MAP OF MODERN GILEAD.

they shall raise up a cry of ⁴ destruction. **■** For the waters ^k of Nimrim shall be ⁶ desolate: for the hay is withered away, the grass faileth, there is no green thing. **7** Therefore the abundance they have gotten, and that which they have laid up, shall they carry away to the ⁶ brook of the willows. **8** For the cry is gone

⁴ Heb. *breaking*.—^k Num. 32. 36.—⁵ Heb. *desolations*.

its location is thought to be identical with Zi'ara, near Mt. Nebo. But see TRISTRAM, *Land of Moab*; also, SMITH'S *Bible Dictionary*, pro and con.

6. Nimrim—For "Nimrim" see Num. xxxi, 35, 36, and Joshua xii, 27, whose indications are that this was a well-watered valley. Tristram, with some hesitation, locates it at the southeast end of the Dead Sea. The text shows that the waters here give out, and every green thing is parched—a figure of devastating war.

7. Brook of the willows—Probably a wady in the vicinity of Nimrim, where are remains of a former town site; not a place in Edom, as held by some. To this place they take with them in their flight all gathered stores. (*Land of Moab*, pp. 72, 82.)

8, 9. The cry is gone round about—Moab becomes in this picture the prey of the enemy throughout. The wail extends from one extreme of the land to the other. **Eglaim**—A double fountain. Eusebius says it was eight Roman miles south of Ar. The place was probably a town site. **Beer-elim**—Was to the northeast, if Num. xxi, 16, 17, be an indication to judge from. **Waters of Dimon**—By easy change of labials, ב for מ, this was Dibon, already noticed. So Gesenius. But this is scarcely better than the theory which makes Dimon come from מַדְ, *blood*, the same word, less

the final letter, appended, perhaps, to mean *place of blood*, and so named, it may be, from the facts in the scene described in third chapter of 2 Kings. There it is shown what part blood played in the defeat of Moab by the allied kings of Judah, Israel, and Edom, who swept around the south

round about the borders of Moab; the howling thereof unto Eglaim, and the howling thereof unto Beer-elim. **9** For the waters of Dimon shall be full of blood: for I will bring ⁷ more upon Dimon, ¹ lions upon him that escapeth of Moab, and upon the remnant of the land.

⁶ Or, *valley of the Arabians*.—⁷ Heb. *additions*.—¹ 2 Kings 17. 25.

end of the Dead Sea to attack Moab, and how appropriately the place of attack was called Dimon. **The waters of Dimon shall be full of blood**—The morning sun-glare upon newly-opened waters on the plain below, led the Moabites to suppose the confederate enemy had broken with and fallen upon each other, with pools of blood as the consequence. This gave courage to Moab to dash after booty into a supposed abandoned camp rather than an ambush, which it was. Thus Moab met the **lions** (allied kings, or at least Judah and its government; see 2 Kings iii, 21–26) and was driven back to his stronghold, on the walls of which he desperately sacrificed to his god Chemosh his son and heir. Such a horror was too much for the invaders, and they retired from the contest.

Does not the celebrated Moabite inscription found in Dibon, in 1870, refer to this scene? Tristram believes the Moab stone, or the monolith of Mesha, to have been brought from the south and walled into the latter structure at Dibon, and thus the ancient Phœnician record was so long preserved from being effaced. (See *Land of Moab*, page 149.)

It is worthy of note, that the description in these latter verses is apparently of scenes about to occur, if not of some, also, already past, and quoted from the ancient prophecy before assumed as the basis for this prophecy, and of that in Jeremiah, chap. xlviii.

CHAPTER XVI.

The subject of the preceding chapter is continued in this. In that is described the horrors of war upon Moab—probably such as were executed by the allied armies for non-

CHAPTER XVI.

SEND ye the lamb to the ruler of the land ^b from ^aSela to the wilderness, unto the mount of the daughter of Zion. **2** For it shall be, *that*, as a wandering bird ² cast out of the nest, so the daughters of Moab shall be at the fords of ^cArnon. **3** ^aTake counsel, execute

^a 2 Kings 3. 4.—^b 2 Kings 14. 7.—¹ Or, *Petra*; Heb. *a rock*.—² Or, *a nest forsaken*.

payment of the customary tribute to Israel, and soon were to be repeated by Judah for a similar reason, and possibly by yet others in the future. This chapter opens with an exhortation to seek refuge from such horrors by coming over again to Judah, and by seeking protection from their liege lord in Jerusalem.

1. Send ye the lamb—Collective for lambs, the traditional yearly tribute due to Judah. It appears from 2 Kings iii, 41, that when Moab was tributary to Jehoram, king of Israel, this tribute amounted to "a hundred thousand lambs, and a hundred thousand rams, with the wool." **From Sela to the wilderness**—That is, from along all the foraging region for Moab's flocks. Sela means *rock*, a city built into an amphitheatre of rocky hills. It was the capital of Edom, and was afterward, under Roman rule, named Petra. It lies about a journey of a day and a half southeast from the southern end of the Dead Sea. The ruins of the city are frequently visited, and its dwellings, tombs, and temples are found to be cut out of the soft red sandstone. Its ingress and egress is by a two-mile valley, very narrow, called Wady Mousa. This Petra seems to have been in the hands of Moab at the time of this prophecy by Isaiah. Underneath the outward expression in the text is doubtless a reference to true relief and salvation through offerings of the sacrificial lambs. Jehovah is the speaker through his prophet, who here appears to sympathize and mourn with Moab.

2, 3. For—Not *for*, but *and*, **it shall be**—If they comply, then this shall follow: *that, as a wandering bird cast... nest*—Moab must acquire favour from Israel or Judah right early,

judgment; make thy shadow as the night in the midst of the noonday; hide the outcasts; bewray not him that wandereth. **4** Let mine outcasts dwell with thee, Moab; be thou a covert to them from the face of the spoiler: for the ⁴extortioner is at an end, the spoiler ceaseth, ⁵the oppressors are consumed out

^c Numbers 21. 13.—³ Heb. *Bring*.—⁴ Heb. *wringer*.—⁵ Heb. *the treaders down*.

(verse 1,) for soon she would stand a restless fugitive on the borders of the latter, and implore protection. Fugitives, here, are compared to fluttering birds, routed from their nests, and left in timid indecision. **Daughters of Moab**—Usually, and especially as applied to Judah, Babylon, etc., the word "daughters" of a place are the inhabitants of the place. But here the women seem to be the suppliants. They stand at the ford of Arnon, the ancient border of Moab. Num. xxi, 13. The exhortation to them is, **Take counsel**—Apply counsel given by the prophet. **Execute judgment**—Rather, *decision*. Decide at once to pass the stream. No delay is admissible. Flee for help to the mount in Jerusalem, Mount Zion. **Shadow as the night**—Seek protection from divine wrath, such as the shadow of night is, from enemies. Let the Lord be thy shadow and pavilion, and be secure as much in noonday as in the night. **Hide the outcasts**—In turn make secure the exiles from Judah in your midst. Often had Moab been such a refuge. **Bewray not**—Reveal not the place of the persecuted exile.

4, 5. Be thou a covert—Who the object of address here is, is matter of dispute. Some make it Moab, others, Judah. The sense depends on which it is. If it be Moab, as the older and later but best accredited writers hold, the "outcasts" here are those of Israel; if it be Israel, those of Moab. The exhortation may be appropriate either way. Give the fugitives, whoever they are, shelter; they will not need it long. The **extortioner** will soon cease. Oppression will soon be over. Trampling invaders, whether here or there, will in judgment be consumed. Not unlikely the reference

of the land. **5** And in mercy ^c shall the throne be ^e established: and he shall sit upon it in truth in the tabernacle of David, ^e judging, and seeking judgment, and hasting righteousness.

6 We have heard of the 'pride of Moab; *he is very proud; even of his haughtiness, and his pride, and his wrath: "but his lies shall not be so.* **7** Therefore shall Moab ^h howl for Moab, every one shall howl: for the foundations

d Daniel 7. 14, 27; Micah 4. 7; Luke 1. 33.—*e* Or, *prepared*.—*f* Psa. 72. 2; 96. 13; 98. 9.—*g* Jer. 48. 29; Zeph. 2. 10.

is to invading Assyrians. Possibly, also, a comprehensive extension is made to **oppressors**, at one time of Judah, at another of Moab, covering the whole history of both. The transition from the one to the other, if it exist, is sudden and obscure: yet as an appeal it might well enough apply to both. Applying to the Jews as affording shelter to fugitives from Moab, the promise is that their own government shall be strengthened by this exercise of mercy, and their prosperity promoted by the coming of a king in the family of David—the Messianic king—who shall judge and seek justice and be prompt in equity and truth. And this means not Hezekiah merely, but all good kings to come, but chiefly the high antitype of David, the Messiah.

6. Whether Moab or Israel, or both, were intended in the promise, Moab will give no heed to it. **We**—Probably Jews. **Have heard of the pride of Moab**—We all have heard of and know his "pride;" he is so very proud that he will reject both counsel and promise. See the parallel in Jeremiah xlvi, 20, 29. **His lies...not.†.so**—Shall not be confirmed or established. Impotent and vain shall they be.

7. Therefore—As a certain result foreseen in the fate of Moab. **Shall Moab howl for Moab**—One part for the other parts shall mutually mourn. It shall be a universal "howl." **Foundations of Kir-hareseth**—The strongest fortress of the nation shall be overthrown. **Kir** was on the southernmost limits. The word means a wall, a strong wall. **Hareseth**—Used of bricks, potsherds, glazed tiles.

ⁱ of Kir-hareseth shall ye ^j mourn; surely *they are stricken.* **8** For ^k the fields of Heshbon languish, and ^l the vine of Sibmah: the lords of the heathen have broken down the principal plants thereof, they are come *even* unto Jazer, they wandered *through* the wilderness: her branches are ^m stretched out, they are gone over the sea. **9** Therefore ⁿ I will bewail with the weeping of Jazer the vine of Sibmah: I will water thee with

g Chap. 28. 15.—*h* Jer. 48. 20.—*i* 2 Kin. 3. 25.—*j* Or, *mutter*.—*k* Chapter 24. 7.—*l* Verse 9.—*m* Or, *plucked up*.—*n* Jer. 48. 32.

Some (as Vitringa, Delitzsch, Alexander, and others) hint at another meaning to the word here rendered "foundations." They render it grapes, cakes, raisins, or pressed grapes, an article of refreshment to wearied ones, thus changing the thought entirely, yet making it congruous with the thought of the verse following.

8. Fields of Heshbon—The region around Heshbon on the north, noted for choice vineyards. **Languish**—Or, wither. The locality lies near to the former sites of Sodom and Gomorrah, on the plain north of the Dead Sea, not south as heretofore believed. **The vine of Sibmah**—This place has not been identified. Jerome speaks of it as only about half a Roman mile from Heshbon. The why the vineyards stand withered is, *the lords of the nations have broken off, or down, the principal plants thereof.* Either Moab's own masters, princes, or Assyrian warriors, were wantonly making havoc in the land: the action is the perpetual present of prophecy—*proleptic*. **They**—The vine plants. **Come even unto Jazer**—So luxuriant are they. The same **wandered**—or **trailed**—through the desert eastward. **They are gone over the sea**—Westward, to the sea or pools of Jazer, or even to the Dead Sea. The fruitful, extending vine is a favourite symbol with Old Testament poets for a populous and luxuriant nation.

9, 10. I will water thee with my tears—The prophet turns to mourning again for the woes of Moab, with a sorrow, however, not patriotic. It is

my tears, "O Heshbon, and Elealeh: for the shouting for thy summer fruits and for thy harvest is fallen. **10** And gladness is taken away, and joy out of the plentiful field; and in the vineyards there shall be no singing, neither shall there be shouting: the treaders shall tread out no wine in their presses; I have made their vintage shouting to cease. **11** Wherefore my bowels shall sound like a harp for Moab, and mine inward parts for Kir-haresh.

n Chap. 15. 4.—*9* Or, the alarm is fallen upon, etc.—*o* Chap. 24. 8; Jer. 48. 33.

because the wrath of Jehovah falls thus on that guilty people. He joins the people of **Jazer** in their weeping for their loss of rich vintages by means of the enemy. The loss upon **Heshbon** and upon **Elealeh** (near to "Heshbon") is shown by the fact that the shout of the harvesters has ceased. In times of harvest and grape gathering joyous shouts are heard in all Oriental lands. Now all is silent in fields and at wine-presses in the land of Moab, and tears of sympathy gush from even the eyes of a denouncing prophet.

11. Wherefore my bowels—An expression of deepest grief. The viscera above the diaphragm, including heart, lungs, liver, are here called "bowels." **Shall sound like a harp**—Grief was capable, it was thought, of causing the heart to beat and the nerves to tremble; and such sensations were fancied to resemble low harp sounds.

12-14. From times long, long past, Jehovah denounced calamity to Moab. Poole refers to Num. xxi, 27-30, as intended. To the nation as a whole there was no relief. **Moab is weary on the high place**—"Weary" with offering unanswered prayer to Chemosh, his god, in his sanctuary, always on hills. "Weary," also, with calamities. **Word...since that time**—Or, hitherto. "Word," here, signifies former predictions respecting Moab; other prophets uttered them. They embodied the same principles contained in this entire prophecy. Isaiah now reiterates them as still ap-

12 And it shall come to pass, when it is seen that Moab is weary on the high place, that he shall come to his sanctuary to pray; but he shall not prevail. **13** This is the word that the Lord hath spoken concerning Moab since that time. **14** But now the Lord hath spoken, saying, Within three years, as the years of a hireling, and the glory of Moab shall be contemned, with all that great multitude; and the remnant shall be very small and feeble.

p Chap. 15. 5; 63. 15; Jer. 48. 26.—*q* Chap. 15. 2.—*r* Chap. 21. 16.—*10* Or, not many.

pliable; and while his prophecy is in part generic, there is a reference in the fourteenth verse to a specific time when the ruin of Moab by some northern power shall be completed, and but the smallest remnant left of the people; they being chiefly those who abandon Chemosh for the worship of Jehovah. "The clause, as the years of a hireling, here, and chap. xxi, 16, must render the designation of time somewhat more definite, inasmuch as the hired labourer serves out his time but no more. Hence the sense is, 'No longer and no shorter.' See chap. xviii, 25."—*Gesenius*.

The prophecy, as a whole, is very obscure. The theory of it as a generic prophecy, covering conditions of Moab at different periods, helps to some solution of it, but its comparative historic relations are so slight as to keep it still obscure.

CHAPTER XVII.

No chronologic order seems to be observed in the arrangement of these chapters. This prophecy was probably delivered near the beginning of the reign of Ahaz. As to time, then, it belongs with chaps. vii and viii. Its occasion—remotely, at least—was the alliance between Damascus and Ephraim. It is arranged herewith as belonging to prophecies relating to the heathen. The prophecy but barely touches Damascus, verses 1-3. It consists of three parts, verses 1-3, 4-11, 12-14. The first is a prediction against Damascus; the second is one respecting Ephraim; the third, one

CHAPTER XVII.

THE burden of Damascus. Behold, Damascus is taken away from *being* a city, and it shall be a ruinous heap.

2 The cities of ^b Aroer are forsaken: they shall be for flocks, which shall lie down, and ^c none shall make them afraid. **3** ^d The fortress also shall cease from Ephraim, and the kingdom from Damascus, and the remnant of Syria: they shall be as the glory of the children of Israel, saith the Lord of hosts. **4** And

in that day it shall come to pass, *that* the glory of Jacob shall be made thin, and ^e the fatness of his flesh shall wax lean. **5** ^f And it shall be as when the harvestman gathereth the corn, and reapeth the ears with his arm; and it shall be as he that gathereth ears in the valley of Rephaim.

6 ^g Yet gleanings grapes shall be left in it, as the shaking of an olive tree, two or three berries in the top of the uppermost bough, four or five in the outmost

^a Jer. 49. 23; Amos 1. 3; Zech. 9. 1; 2 Kings 16. 9.—^b Num. 32. 34; Jer. 48. 19.

^c Jer. 7. 33.—^d Chap. 7. 16; 8. 4.—^e Chap. 10. 16.—^f Jer. 51. 33.—^g Chap. 24. 13.

respecting the Assyrians. Damascus is a very ancient city, and is in flourishing condition at the present time. It lies on a vast and fertile oasis just east of the Anti-Lebanon range, forty miles southeast from Beyroot as the bird flies. In its history it has been several times captured and reduced to comparative ruin, but as often rebuilt, having ceased "to be a city" each time for only a brief period.

1. Burden—An oracle, a declaration, or a conviction moving to utter a threat. See chap. xiii. 1. Later critical scholars reject this phrase here, as added by copyists. **Damascus is taken away**—It shall be or is destroyed; its name shall be or is erased from the list of cities. It did become ruined by Tiglath-pileser about B. C. 739; then by Shalmaneser, B. C. 723.

2. Cities of Aroer—Cities round about "Aroer," and under its jurisdiction. (Gesenius.) Aroer was a small territory not far south from Damascus. There were, however, two trans-Jordanic cities of this name—one in Moab, another near Rabbah-Ammon; the latter at this time may have been subject to Syria, captured from Israel. **Flocks**—Peacefully lying down amid abandoned ruins; a telling reproach, but at the same time a fine picture.

3. The fortress...shall cease from Ephraim—During their confederacy, Damascus was the defence of Israel or Ephraim—so called because this tribe was the chief of the ten tribes of Israel. In the fall of Damascus this defence comes to an end. So does the glory of that city, and of the chief

part of Syria, cease. Its inhabitants are removed. Ephraim loses its bulwark, and Damascus its position as the capital. Syria throughout becomes as miserable as depopulated Israel. One cannot but see bitter irony in the comparing of the glory of Damascus with that of decayed Israel.

4. The glory of Jacob—That of the ten tribes, to which the prophet now turns. This is humbled indeed, when the Assyrian power shall carry away its men in crowds. **Shall wax lean**—Poor, attenuated, sick Israel! The Chaldee has it: "The riches of Israel shall be removed."

5. Harvestman gathereth the corn—The figure used here denotes that the people and wealth of Israel are collected and removed by the Assyrian, just as the husbandman gathers the wheat or barley in his arm to reap down with his sickle; a common fact observable every season in the Valley of Rephaim, near Jerusalem, just south of the city, veering westward of Bethlehem: the largest area of harvest land in the vicinity.

6. Gleaning grapes shall be left—Similar to what remains of lingering olives—two or three in the top and four or five in the lateral branches, after the hard beating with sticks in the late harvest of the olive trees. The deportation of people will be so thorough that only here and there will an occasional poor family be left. See THOMSON'S *The Land and the Book*, (vol. i, page 74,) where present practices in that land exhibit the aptness and beauty of the figure in the text.

fruitful branches thereof, saith the Lord God of Israel. **7** At that day shall a man ^alook to his Maker, and his eyes shall have respect to the Holy One of Israel. **8** And ^hhe shall not look to the altars, the work of his hands, neither shall respect *that* which his fingers have made, either the groves, or the ⁱimages.

■ In that day shall his strong cities be as a forsaken bough, and an uppermost branch, which they left because of the

^h Micah 7. 7. — ⁱ 2 Chron. 34. 6, 7; Hos. 14. 8; Zech. 13. 2. — 1 Or, *sun images*. — ^k Psalm

7, 8. At that day—The day when calamity comes on Damascus and Ephraim, and the Assyrians carry away the people. It is matter of history, that after the Assyrian conquest and the deportation of the great body of Israel, many that were left accepted Hezekiah's call to return to the worship of Jehovah at Jerusalem. 2 Chron. xxx, 11. **Shall not look to the altars**—Israel and Judah were both enticed to Syrian and Phœnician worship. Ahaz had ordered a copy of the altar at Damascus for the temple at Jerusalem. 2 Kings xvi, 10–12. **Either the groves, or the images**—Both these had usurped the place of Jehovah. The one, *Asherim*, are called "groves" by the old writers; they were used for idol and licentious worship. Modern writers regard them as images of the Phœnician Venus, serving essentially the same purpose. The other, *Chamanim*, are supposed to be sun-gods representing Baal, the male deity. The "images" were figures of the sun standing upon the altars of Baal. More precise information cannot be given, owing to the danger of confounding the many local varieties of Shemitic mythology. See WILKINS'S *Phœnicia and Israel*.

9. Shall his strong cities—Those of Ephraim in the day of Assyrian capture. **Be as a forsaken bough**—Rather, *as the abandoned thicket, or forest*. **And an uppermost branch**—Or, mountain height, which men left or abandoned of old, as the Israelites under Joshua compelled. The Septuagint reads: Thy cities shall be "forsaken" in the way the Amorites (mountaineers) and Hivites (lowland-

children of Israel: and there shall be desolation. **10** Because thou hast forgotten ^kthe God of thy salvation, and hast not been mindful of the rock of thy strength, therefore shalt thou plant pleasant plants, and shalt set it with strange slips: **11** In the day shalt thou make thy plant to grow, and in the morning shalt thou make thy seed to flourish: *but* the harvest *shall be* ²a heap in the day of grief and of desperate sorrow.

68, 19. — 2 Or, *removed in the day of inheritance, and there shall be deadly sorrow*.

ers occupying plains and groves) did forsake (or flee) before the **children of Israel**. To this rendering essentially most writers now accede. For sins not unlike those of the old races before them is Ephraim also to be punished, and in like way punished, namely, driven from their land.

10. Because thou—Ephraim, Israel. **Hast forgotten... salvation**—Explanation of the preceding verse. The Israelites were to be punished as there described. But the other result was to follow first, namely, they fell into idolatry. **Not been mindful... Rock of thy strength**—The Lord, Jehovah. Weary of the wholesome discipline of serving him, they pondered to the lustful pleasures of a false religion. **They plant pleasant plants**, or pleasant plantations, perhaps groves for illicit pleasures connected with idolatrous worship, for to this view the next phrase allies itself. **Set it with strange slips**—In the midst of their idolatrous garden-grounds they inserted vines from Syria and Damascus. Ephraim sought help and protection from Damascus and Syria rather than from Jehovah, his own covenant God.

11. Make thy plant to grow—On the very day of (or, quite at the immediate) planting of his pleasant garden-ground, (of his overture with Damascus,) he assiduously guarded it by a hedge. He turned away totally from Jehovah. **In the morning**—On the very next morning he found what he had sown in full bloom—his agreement respecting alliance with a foreign power was hearty, he was ready to take the sensual worship of

12 Woe to the multitude of many people, *which* make a noise like the noise of the seas; and to the rushing of nations, *that* make a rushing like the rushing of mighty waters!

13 The nations shall rush like the rushing of many waters: but God shall rebuke them, and they shall flee far

3 Or, *noise*.—1 Jer. 6. 23.—4 Or, *many*.—*m* Psal. 9. 5.

Damascus as his state religion; and the blossom was rapidly advancing to fruitage, that is, to a place of united attack upon Judah. But this plantation, so promising at first to Israel, and succeeding, apparently, so well, was all at once a **harvest heap** for the day of terrible judgment.

12. Woe—The word is more properly, *Ho*, or *Ha*; a word of surprise; something suddenly turning up to the attention, and wholly absorbing it. The scene is now changed, as in chap. viii. 5–10, to the fate of the destroying world-power. *Assyria itself is broken.*

Multitude of many people—*Ho!* The uproar of many nations yonder! Avengers they are of backslidden Israel, coming to execute judgment on peoples this way: but destruction, also, is ultimately destined upon them.

These last verses are seemingly separated from the preceding; the leap of thought here is considerable; but, as heretofore noticed of Isaiah, such abruptness is not unusual. In this case, the scene is as if, on a pause at the conclusion at the eleventh verse, the prophet's thought respecting the instrument to crush Damascus and Israel had darted like lightning through Assyria in all the extent of her provinces, over her territories, and through all destinies attending these, and was arrested, as in vision they were seen generally mustering for a final judgment and overthrow, with the words following:—

"Hark! The noise of many nations! Like the noise of the sea, they make a noise! And the rush of peoples! Like the rush of mighty waters they are rushing! Nations, like the rush of many waters, rush; and he (God) rebukes it, and it flees from afar, and is chased like the chaff (or thistle-down) of hills before

off, and shall be chased as the chaff of the mountains before the wind, and like a rolling thing before the whirlwind. 14 And behold at evening-tide trouble; and before the morning he is not. This is the portion of them that spoil us, and the lot of them that rob us.

n Psalm 83. 13; Hosea 13. 3.—5 Or, *thistle down*.

the wind, and like a rolling thing (probably rolling dust) before a whirlwind."

The translation is Alexander's. Delitzsch says, "The many surging nations (or sub-kingdoms of Assyria) are kneaded together, as it were, into one mass. It costs God simply a threatening word, and this mass flies all apart, and falls into dust, and whirls about in all directions, like the chaff of threshingfloors in high places, or like dust whirled up by the storm." All literature may be challenged to show a passage of greater power.

14. And behold...trouble—The different renderings are, *terror, trouble, consternation, horror, the shriek of death.* **At evening-tide**—At the time of evening. **Before...morning he is not**—Some suppose a proleptic allusion here to the swoop of destruction upon Sennacherib's army. Possibly the imagery is purposely suited to that slaughter, yet the language will apply to many other deliverances and judgments. Judgment upon the imperial powers began in the evening, raged through the night: in the morning all were destroyed. This power had finished Damascus and Ephraim; it essayed to demolish Judah; but was itself swept, as it were in a moment, out of existence. So went, ultimately, the whole empire, broken, scattered, and swallowed up by other powers.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Of the several theories respecting this prophecy, the most approvable to sound judgment is that which, in a prophetic way, connects it with the last three verses of the preceding chapter. The prophet herein "announces the overthrow of Sennacherib's hosts, and desires the ambassa-

CHAPTER XVIII.

WOE ^ato the land shadowing with wings, which is beyond the rivers of Ethiopia: **2** That sendeth ambassadors by the sea, even in vessels of bulrushes upon the waters, *saying*, Go, ye swift messengers, to ^ba nation ¹scattered

and peeled, to a people terrible from their beginning hitherto; ²a nation meted out and trodden down, ³whose land the rivers have spoiled! **3** All ye inhabitants of the world, and dwellers on the earth, see ye, ^cwhen he lifteth up an ensign on the mountains; and when he bloweth a

^a Chap. 20. 4, 5; Ezek. 30. 4, 5, 9; Zeph. 2. 12; 3. 10.—^b Ver. 7.—¹ Or, *outspread and polished*.—² Or, *a nation that meteth out and*

treadeth down. Heb. *a nation of line, line, and treading under foot*.—³ Or, *whose land the rivers despise*.—^c Chap. 5. 26.

dors of Ethiopia now in Jerusalem to take word of it to their own nation, and calls on the world to witness the event."—*Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown*. Sargon of Assyria had humbled Ethiopia, and Sennacherib was on his way to complete the work of his father when he was met with a providential defeat. One word more in relation to Ethiopia. It is known that Ethiopia, with Egypt, constituted, in the prophet's time, the great rival empire to Assyria in the northeast. Sabaco, of the 25th, or the Ethiop-Egyptian, dynasty, was the Tirhaka of the Old Testament. His Ethiopic realm extended above Egypt southward; covering, probably, the present Nubia, Sennaar, Kordofa, northern Abyssinia, also Upper and Lower Egypt, as one empire.

1. Woe—Not minatory, but salutatory: *Ho!* **Land shadowing with wings**—Or, *land of the clanging sound of wings*; the buzz or rustling of insect wings; or, as some interpret, referring to the rustle and clatter of marching armies; as if it means, "Ho, land that sends forth armies to the aid of invaded Egypt below." **Beyond the rivers**—That is, regions lying south of Egypt around and beyond the head-waters of the Nile.

2. By the sea—The Nile. Any distinguished waters were called seas. **Saying**—This is useless. The word is not in the original, nor is it essential to the sense of the passage. **Go, ye**—This is addressed to the vessels on the Nile made of papyrus (bulrushes) bark. This plant, now seldom found, anciently abounded along the Nile and its branches, and from its inner bark the earlier writing material was obtained, as well as from its strips coverings for boat frames;

thus making "ships" light for sailing on the level Nile, and portable for its cataracts. **To a nation scattered and peeled**—A description of the Ethiopians. Better, *tall, or drawn out, and smooth*. So the original. To a people of smooth skin, lithe, active, and **terrible**, or much to be feared, for their fierceness. **From their beginning**—From that time and beyond, or from long ago; referring, perhaps, to an antiquity sufficient to account for the constitutional difference in blackness, smoothness of skin, etc. **A nation meted out**—Still the Ethiopians. The Hebrew is, קָרָן, (*kav, kav*) *line, line*. The English translation implies a measuring line thoroughly used. (The repeated words imply this.) The measuring line was in war used upon buildings devoted to destruction. By figure it may here mean all destroyers, and hence the term is of active signification, not passive; and if this be active, so the next word. Then it is not *trodden*, but *treading down*; a people treading and crushing; an all powerful and victorious people. **Spoiled**—This also is an inadequate rendering, and was made on an incorrect theory of the passage. It rather means, *dissects, cuts up*. The branches of the Upper Nile divide the country into many sections.

3. See ye, when, etc.—The picture takes in the prophet as saying to all the people in those far lands, "Be ready when ye shall see the signal raised on the mountains; note it, when the trumpet shall sound; listen, and be on the alert." The prophet's alarm is in the interest of Judah, or, which is the same thing, of Jehovah's cause. The passage-way of the ar-

trumpet, hear ye. **4** For so the LORD said unto me, I will take my rest, and I will ⁴consider in my dwellingplace like a clear heat ⁴upon herbs, and like a cloud of dew in the heat of harvest. **5** For afore the harvest, when the bud is perfect, and the sour grape is ripening in the flower, he shall both cut off the sprigs with pruninghooks, and take away ^{and} cut down the branches. **6** They shall be left together unto the fowls of the mountains, and to the beasts of the

earth; and the fowls shall summer upon them, and all the beasts of the earth shall winter upon them.

7 In that time ^dshall the present be brought unto the LORD of hosts of a people ^escattered and peeled, and from a people terrible from their beginning hitherto; a nation meted out and trodden under foot, whose land the rivers have spoiled, to the place of the name of the LORD of hosts, the mount Zion.

⁴ Or, regard my set dwelling.—⁵ Or, after rain.—^d See Psa. 68. 31; 73. 10; chap. 16. 1;

Zeph. 3. 10; Mal. 1. 11.—^e Or, utspread and polished. See verse 2.

mies of the rival empires lay through Judah, now a dependent of Egypt, on account of which dependence Judah is to suffer if Assyria prevails. The implied prediction is, that God is about to deliver the world from the all-conquering might of Assyria.

4. All being thus ready, Jehovah comes now into the scene. In his watchful providence he looks on calmly from the high heavens, and waits up to the right time. **Like a clear heat upon herbs**—“Clear heat” is serene, continuous heat, suited to ripen herbs, grasses, wheat. **Like a cloud of dew**—Moisture combining with heat to hasten the harvest. The Hebrew particle כִּי *kaph*,

here twice used, is a particle of comparison, not of time, and the meaning obviously is, that God not only does not hinder the operations of the enemy against Egypt and Ethiopia, but he even favours his success to a certain point, as dew and sunshine promote a ripening harvest.

5. But God does interfere at the last and right moment. **For afore the harvest**—In this case the grape harvest, as the defining terms following indicate. In the interval between the two harvests God has looked calmly on. The Assyrian's answer to the figure of the “grape harvest”—the pruning and nipping off of shoots to facilitate ripening by letting in of sunheat—symbolizes God's own forwarding of the enemy and his plans unto destruction.

6. They...be left—The branches cut off for the **fowls** and **beasts** represent the carcasses of the enemy

laid prostrate on the field, as the Assyrians were arrested in their march against Egypt. Both Judah is saved, and Egypt and Ethiopia are relieved from the dreaded foe. This is the message the Ethiopian ambassadors of verse 2 were summoned to send off to their country. The message relates to the destruction of the enemy, and said destruction was a marked wonder, worthy to be known at the farthest places of the earth. For the enemy just ready to pounce upon the Egyptians, and with them upon Judah also, was itself pounced upon by the Almighty One. This event is the **ensign on the mountains**, and the **trumpet** sound (verse 3) to which the prophet invites Ethiopia's attention. The mustering of their hosts in self-defence is not now necessary. God has come to their defence, but chiefly in behalf of his people in Judah.

7. In that time shall the present be brought—Now that Ethiopia is delivered by the fall of her enemy, the usual offerings of submission and gratitude are due from her. The proper offering is, that of herself to her deliverer, making herself over to him and to his religion as established on **mount Zion**. The terms characterizing Ethiopia are the same as in verse 2, where see explanations. Was this call to the Ethiopians unheeded? Did this wonder from Jehovah—the Assyrian destruction—prove a vain event in directing the world's attention to Him as its almighty Creator and Sovereign? “This particular case has already thrown forward some foreshadowing of its fu-

CHAPTER XIX.

THE "burden of Egypt. Behold, the Lord "rideth upon a swift cloud, and shall come into Egypt: and "the idols of Egypt shall be moved at his presence, and the heart of Egypt shall

a Jer. 46. 13; Ezek. ch. 29, 30. — *b* Psa. 18. 10; 101. 3. — *c* Exod. 12. 12; Jer. 43. 12.

ture fulfilment in the scenes briefly sketched in Acts viii, 26-39, when the prime minister of a celebrated queen of Ethiopia found Christ, by the aid of Philip, in reading this very book of Isalah, and went home to his country rejoicing. Also in the further fact, that some vestiges of Christianity—traces of its early power, and perhaps prophecies of its later—have lived in that remote land unto this day. Assuredly 'Ethiopia shall yet stretch forth her hands unto God.'"
—*Cowles.*

CHAPTER XIX.

The three chapters—xviii, xix, xx,—are each essentially upon the same subject, namely, Egypt; but each is a distinct prophecy, though the three together make up one historic and poetic picture. In this picture the first is the introduction, without special leading, and there is pathos in what it speaks of Ethiopia. The second speaks in calmer mood of Egypt; and the third speaks historically of Egypt and Ethiopia. Doubtless Egypt is made the subject of prophecy because of its old time relations with Israel, and because Judah has present need of warning against too much dependence on Egypt.

1. The Lord rideth . . . into Egypt—Not the first time, not a strange visitation. The colour of the expression shows a plain recalling of the old events of Moses in Egypt. Exodus, chapters x-xii. **Upon a swift cloud**—This time the manner of Jehovah's coming is beset with no hindrances, no hand-to-hand contest, as in old time. The almighty Providence glides easily, though swiftly, on to retribution. But retribution here is intended discipline. See verse 22. **Idols . . . moved . . . presence**—The first effective inroads upon the

melt in the midst of it. **2** And I will "set" the Egyptians against the Egyptians: and they shall fight every one against his brother, and every one against his neighbour; city against city, and kingdom against kingdom. **3** And

d Judg. 7. 22; 1 Sam. 14. 16, 20; 2 Chron. 20. 23. — *1* Heb. *mingie*.

idols of Egypt were made by the Persian Cambyses, (SMITH'S *History of the World*, vol. i, page 287,) B. C. 525. Later, Jewish settlements in Egypt gradually effected a reaction upon the whole idol system. Judaism, still later reinforced by the new power of Christianity, and Mohammedanism later still, quite demolished the old Egyptian religions. The chief of the Egyptian idols were the bull, crocodile, etc. These are said to be **moved**, that is, agitated, stirred up, at prospect of destruction.

2-4. Opinions greatly vary as to when the events here described took place. Of the most plausible, one refers them to times shortly following the destruction of Sennacherib's army, during which times the affairs of Egypt were in great confusion. Another opinion (and which is to be preferred) places the events *in successu*; the reference to Nebuchadnezzar's conquest being general, and to the conquest of Cambyses particular; and the whole referring to successive disciplinary punishments, but ending with deliverances, such as the final adoption of the worship of the true God will bring. The lesson taught is, that Jehovah is the God of all nations, especially of Egypt and Assyria, the greatest kingdoms then known; and that his worship effects the only true salvation for all.

2. Egyptians against . . . Egyptians—One district or *nome* against another. So the Septuagint: or, Upper, Middle, and Lower Egypt against each other. The former is the more probable meaning. In all Egypt there were at various times from thirty-six to forty-two of such divisions. Or, the immediate thought of divisions may be that of the *Dodakarchy*, or the twelve provinces, from B. C. 695 till Psammetichus. (See SMITH'S *History*, vol. i.)

the spirit of Egypt ² shall fail in the midst thereof; and I will ³ destroy the counsel thereof; and they shall ⁴ seek to the idols, and to the charmers, and to them that have familiar spirits, and to the wizards. **4** And the Egyptians will I ⁴ give over 'into the hand of a cruel lord; and a fierce king shall rule over them, saith the Lord, the LORD of hosts. **5** ⁵ And the waters shall fail from the sea, and the river shall be wasted and dried up. **6** And they shall turn the

rivers far away; and the brooks ² of defence shall be emptied and dried up: the reeds and flags shall wither. **7** The paper reeds by the brooks, by the mouth of the brooks, and every thing sown by the brooks, shall wither, be driven away, ⁵ and be no more. **8** The fishers also shall mourn, and all they that cast angle into the brooks shall lament, and they that spread nets upon the waters shall languish. **9** Moreover they that work in ¹ fine flax, and they that weave ⁶ net-

² Heb. *shall be emptied*.—³ Heb. *swallow up*.—⁴ Chap. 8. 19: 47, 12.—⁴ Or, *shut up*.—⁵ Chap. 20. 4; Jer. 46. 26; Ezek. 29. 19.

⁶ Jer. 51. 36; Ezek. 30. 12.—² 2 Kings 19. 24.—⁵ Heb. *and shall not be*.—¹ 1 Kings 10. 28; Prov. 7. 16.—⁶ Or, *white works*.

3. And the spirit of Egypt—

That is, Egypt's wisdom, its customary wisdom, shall fail, or, as in the literal Hebrew, shall be emptied or poured out, in that while overwhelmed in their troubles they look not to Jehovah for help, but to their idols. To these, rather, did they seek; and to the charmers, persons who pretended to imitate the softly suppressed voices of the under world, and to them that have familiar spirits, who employed themselves in invoking the *manes* of the dead by magical incantations, and to the wizards, that is, lying prophets of every kind.

4. A fierce king—Rather, a strong, powerful king, but such as proved a cruel master. As without much doubt the prophecy is general, this one character may apply to several rulers—Nebuchadnezzar, Psammetichus, and Cambyses—the most merciless of whom, however, was Psammetichus. See SMITH'S *Dictionary of Biography*.

5. Waters shall fail from the sea—The Nile river, the life of Egypt, is still called *el Bahr*, the Sea. But little rain falls in Egypt, and that only near the Mediterranean. The Nile, therefore, is the entire dependence for fertility. Drouth in the south mountains is hence the destruction of Egypt, and this forms the ground for the figures of the following verses. See also Nahum iii, 9.

6, 7. Shall turn the rivers—Many famines have occurred in Egypt owing to failure of the rains in the south. The river becomes low and stagnant and putrid. Instead of "they

shall turn the rivers," the *Speaker's Commentary* renders, "The rivers shall become loathsome;" and Lange, "shall become a stench." **Brooks of defence**—The Nile canals were a "defence" in two ways: the first, in giving fertility and defending from starvation; the second in being unbridged moats against invading hordes; but being dried up, they would allow a foe to approach the walls of the city. **Reeds... flags... paper reeds**—The first two of these mean the papyrus, doubtless; (see chap. xviii, 2;) "paper reeds" is from a different word in Hebrew. Gesenius supposes, from its root, that bare places along the banks covered with grass are intended. The meaning is, the Nile is unavailing to the people. It brings no food by its fertility. It brings no commerce, on account of the half-anarchical condition of the country; but it does bring stench, disease, and death by its stagnancy.

8. Fishers... they that cast angle... **spread nets**—Arts and manufactures, and the fishery trade, all suffer. Fish and vegetables were the food of the people on account of their superstition respecting animal food. The lower classes were greatly affected by famines, cruel labours, and civil disturbances. **Spread nets**—The net is not used at this day; anciently it was used, as proved by the fishnets found on the monuments.

9. Fine flax—In Hebrew, *hatchelled flax*. **Networks**—White linen.—*Gesenius*. Proverbs vii, 16; Ezekiel xxvii, 7.

works, shall be confounded. **10** And they shall be broken in the ⁷ purposes thereof, all that make sluices *and* ponds ⁸ for fish.

11 Surely the princes of ⁹ Zoan are fools, the counsel of the wise counsellors of Pharaoh is become brutish: how say ye unto Pharaoh, *I am* the son of the wise, the son of ancient kings? **12** ¹ Where are they? where are thy wise *men*? and let them tell thee now, and let them know what the LORD of hosts hath purposed upon Egypt. **13** The princes of Zoan are become fools, ² the princes of Noph are deceived; they have also seduced Egypt, *even* ³ they that are the stay of the

tribes thereof. **14** The LORD hath mingled ⁴ a ¹⁰ perverse spirit in the midst thereof: and they have caused Egypt to err in every work thereof, as a drunken *man* staggereth in his vomit. **15** Neither shall there be *any* work for Egypt, which ⁵ the head or tail, branch or rush, may do. **16** In that day shall Egypt ⁶ be like unto women: and it shall be afraid and fear because of the shaking of the hand of the LORD of hosts, ⁷ which he shaketh over it. **17** And the land of Judah shall be a terror unto Egypt, every one that maketh mention thereof shall be afraid in himself, because of the

⁷ Heb. *foundations*.—⁸ Heb. *of living things*.—⁹ Num. 13. 22.—¹⁰ 1 Cor. 1. 20.—¹¹ Jer. 2. 16.—¹² Or, *governors*. Heb. *corners*.

¹ n 1 Kings 22. 22; chap. 29. 10.—² 10 Heb. *a spirit of perversities*.—³ o Ch. 9. 14.—⁴ p Jer. 51. 30; Nahum 3. 13.—⁵ q Chap. 11. 15.

10. Broken in the purposes thereof—Their strong men, their higher castes. The pillars of the land are crushed to pieces. So the Hebrew. Strange translation in our version! The ruin is general. Both high and low suffer. **All that make sluices**—Dam makers across canals to overflow the lands. Workers for wages, these especially suffer.

11-13. Princes of Zoan—"Zoan," the ancient Tanis, the present Tsan, was the capital of the northeastern kingdom, as Noph, (verse 13,) or Memphis, was of Central Egypt. These are representative cities for all Egypt in this prophecy. Pharaoh was a name, not of a person but of the royal house, personified in the ruling head at the time. His princes or counsellors are a stupified cabinet in these prophetic times, though they boast royal descent and great wisdom. See Herodotus, ii, 141. They were the priestly caste out of which kings were chosen. **Where are they**—A sarcastic asking what they amount to as pretended wise-men. **Let them know**—If they cannot tell, then let them learn from the Lord of hosts, and so obtain certain knowledge what is designed upon Egypt. In themselves the whole priestly class are very fools. **The stay of the tribes**—Literally, *the corner-stone of her tribes*. Still the priestly class is meant. They probably assured safety as against Assyria, or as against their only dreaded foe in the far northeast.

14. Perverse spirit—All such acts attributed to God are but declarations of the general fact, that if men *will* dash their heads against a stone wall their brains will come out. This is the part God performs in his sending moral infatuation among men. His laws cannot be broken with impunity. God was no further responsible than this for the bad counsel which caused **Egypt to err**.

15. Any work for Egypt—Any plan or invention devised for Egypt's extrication from difficulty by any class, or all classes combined, as expressed in the familiar proverbial designations, **head or tail**, which means high or low castes. **Branch or rush**—The same thought under figure of lofty palm branches, representing the high castes, and of the humble reeds along the Nile, denoting the lower classes—the *fellahs* of this day.

16. In that day—The day when these calamities come. **Like unto women**—A figure expressive of timidity and fear. Used also by other prophets. Jer. li, 30; Nahum iii, 13. **Shaking of the hand**—A gesture, not here of summons, but of menace—menace of judgments by invaders. Chapters x, 5, 32; xi, 15. Hopeful amendment appears at once from such gestures.

17. Land of Judah... terror unto Egypt—Not because of possible invasion from Judah; the Jews were never equal to this; besides, at this time they were at peace with Egypt;

counsel of the LORD of hosts, which he hath determined against it.

18 In that day shall five cities in the land of Egypt speak ¹¹ the language of Canaan, and swear to the LORD of hosts; one shall be called, The city ¹² of destruction. **19** In that day shall there be an altar to the LORD in the midst of the

r Zeph. 3. 9.—11 Heb. *the lip*.—12 Or, *of Heres*, or, *of the sun*.

but because the author of the calamities of Egypt was the God of Judah. **Thereof**—Judah. **It**—Egypt.

18. In that day—"Day" has here, probably, the large meaning of the whole period included in this prophecy. **Five cities**—Probably meaning several—the definite number being used for an indefinite. Only a very few centuries later than the date of this prophecy, many of the large towns of Egypt were witness to a copious use of the Hebrew language and of the Hebrew worship; and it is probable that many Egyptians became proselytes to the Jewish religion, as was the fact elsewhere, wherever the Jews made settlements.

City of destruction—Respecting one of these five, or several, cities, there shall be the name or designation "City of Destruction," or, *Ir-Haheres*, "City of the Sun." Many excellent critics suppose a play upon the Hebrew Heres and Hheras, (consult Fürst, Gesenius, SMITH'S *Bible Dictionary*, and all the best commentaries.) If the word means sun, the city referred to was Heliopolis, where the sun had once been worshipped, on account of which comes the name Heliopolis, and still on account of which the doom of destruction was to come upon it. Literally, this did come, and there is now nothing left of it but walls crumbled to earth, and a single obelisk. On my visit to it in the winter of 1870 the whole level area was a flourishing wheatfield. Ewald explains the difficulty here somewhat as follows: "At first there are, perhaps, only five cities in Egypt in which Jehovah was worshipped by Israelites already settled there. One of which was so placed under the divine care that it was called the city of Fortune or Protection, (supposing the Hebrew word really

land of Egypt, and a pillar at the border thereof to the LORD. **20** And 'it shall be for a sign and for a witness unto the LORD of hosts in the land of Egypt: for they shall cry unto the LORD because of the oppressors, and he shall send them a saviour, and a great one, and he shall deliver them. **21** And the LORD shall be

s Gen. 28. 18; Exod. 24. 4; Josh. 22. 10, 26, 27. —*t* See Josh. 4. 20; 22. 27.

to mean this, and not *destruction*;) that it was intended to be a place of resort for God's people in the future, as one of the cities in Egypt (and probably this one) certainly did afford protection to the infant child Jesus."

19. Altar—The word "altar" literally supposes the offering of sacrifices. Here, however, its meaning may have the confined sense of *memorial*, a memorial of the conversion of the Egyptians to the true religion. **Pillar**—A monument of the same fact. In the prophet's conception God (possibly) decrees to this end a conversion of the symbol of the obelisks so common in Egypt. Another illustration of this general meaning may be offered here. In this district or *nome* of Heliopolis, but in the city of Leontopolis, Onias IV, (see Josephus, *Ant.*, xiii, chap. iii, 1, 2, 3,) disappointed in obtaining the highpriesthood at Jerusalem, B. C. 149, on fleeing to Ptolemy in Egypt, received permission to build a temple for Jewish worship resembling that at Jerusalem, but smaller and less splendid. Onias is said to have pleaded this very nineteenth verse as propriety and authority for his doing so. This temple and its worship lasted over two hundred years. The "altar" and "pillar" may have had exemplification here also. A sort of fulfilment of this verse may also be found in the fact of so many synagogues being erected in Egypt from Alexander's time on, and in the fact, too, of the Hebrew Scriptures receiving a Greek version—the Septuagint—by command of Ptolemy.

20. And it—The "altar," or the "pillar." The idea of salvation and deliverance in this verse is, without doubt, the moral rescue which the land received on being delivered from its old time besotting idolatries.

known to Egypt, and the Egyptians shall know the LORD in that day, and "shall do sacrifice and oblation; yea, they shall vow a vow unto the LORD, and perform it. **22** And the LORD shall smite Egypt: he shall smite and heal it: and they shall return *even* to the LORD, and he shall be entreated of them, and shall heal them.

23 In that day "shall there be a highway out of Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrian shall come into Egypt, and the Egyptian into Assyria, and the Egyptians

shall serve with the Assyrians. **24** In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, *even* a blessing in the midst of the land: **25** Whom the LORD of hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed *be* Egypt my people, and Assyria "the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance.

CHAPTER XX.

IN the year that "Tartan came unto Ashdod, (when Sargon the king of Assyria sent him,) and fought against

u Mal. 1. 11.—*v* Ch. 11. 16.—*w* Psa. 100. 3;

ch. 29. 23; *Hos.* 2. 23; *Eph.* 2. 10.—*a* 2 Kin. 18. 17.

21. Egypt shall know—The above idea continues and is expanded, as usual with the prophet when he sees the grand results of the prevalence of the true worship of Jehovah. From the small beginning with five cities, one "altar," and one "pillar," the whole of Egypt comes to know Jehovah, and this knowledge soon shows itself in acts of worship.

22. Smite Egypt—Egypt's allegiance to Jehovah will still be very mixed, calling for smittings to amend and correct the people.

23. A highway out of Egypt—In like manner with "Egypt," Assyria is to be humbled. Both these great powers are to go down, and the trampling upon Judah by their great armies is to cease. Peace between them is simply the work of divine chastisement causing both, in some degree, to acknowledge Jehovah as the mightiest ruler of the earth.

24, 25. In that day—Here, doubtless, the Messianic "day." The language here is but the prefiguration of great moral changes. **Shall Israel**—The Israel through whom, according to God's covenant with Abraham, "all nations shall be blessed." **The third with Egypt and with Assyria**—The three nations shall be at peace, and Israel shall be the instrument of spiritual revolutions in their midst. While Israel was untrue to Jehovah he was crushed between the great hostile world-powers; but repenting and returning, he is to become the means of bringing both Egypt and Assyria to the feet of Jehovah to become his people.

Much of implied reference is no doubt made here to the far and wide dispersion of the Jews, diffusing influences preparatory to the incoming gospel age; of which influences the first noted instalment was brought to view at the day of Pentecost.

CHAPTER XX.

The view of Egypt's future in the preceding chapter—extending far into its better ages—is here followed by a view of some prior calamities that are to befall Egypt and Ethiopia.

1. In the year that Tartan came unto Ashdod—There is uncertainty as to date, but it lay probably between B. C. 727 and 720. "Tartan" is an official name, like captain-general. Of the Assyrian kings mentioned in the Bible, Sargon's name occurs only here. According to the present state of decipherments of the Assyrian texts, it is probable that Sargon was a usurper of the throne during the three years' siege of Samaria by Shalmaneser. 2 Kings xviii, 9-12. It is likewise probable that he completed that siege and himself took Samaria; that he was the father and predecessor of Sennacherib; that his reign began in the same year (B. C. 721) with that of Merodach-Baladan in the then subordinate province of Babylon, and that his reign was long and prosperous. "Ashdod" was the key to Egypt, and when laid waste only Lachish lay much in the way of unhindered passage into that country; hence Sennacherib afterward laid siege to and took that city. See these facts stated more fully at chapters xxxvi-xxxix.

Ashdod, and took it; **2** At the same time spake the Lord ¹by Isaiah the son of Amoz, saying, Go and loose ^bthe sackcloth from off thy loins, and put off thy shoe from thy foot. And he did so, ^cwalking naked and barefoot. **3** And the Lord said, Like as my servant Isaiah hath walked naked and barefoot three years ^dfor a sign and wonder upon Egypt and upon Ethiopia; **4** So shall the king of Assyria lead away ^ethe Egyptians prisoners, and the Ethiopians captives, young and old, naked and barefoot,

¹ Heb. *by the hand of Isaiah*.—^b Zech. 13. 4.
—^c 1 Sam. 19. 24; Mic. 1. 8, 11.—^d Chap. 8. 18.
—^e 2 Heb. *the captivity of Egypt*.—^e 2 Sam.

2. Loose the sackcloth—An outward garment, and not unfrequently worn as a badge of humiliation, and symbol of unwelcome tidings. It was the habitual covering of the prophet, especially in the dark days of those sieges in the vicinity of Jerusalem on the Philistine plains below. Isaiah, divesting himself of this and of his sandals—thus stripped of all clothing save his undergarment or tunic—was a symbolic prediction, or picture of some unusual suffering. The “sackcloth” was probably of goats’ hair; it was the covering of Elijah, and usually of other—even of false—prophets. Zech. xiii, 4.

3. Like as my servant—“My servant” was a term of honour applied to Abraham, Job, Moses, David; afterward to regenerate Israel; then to Messiah, in the latter chapters of this book. **Walked . . . barefoot three years**—This time of Isaiah’s imposed extra humiliation on public occasions, was intended as an impressive portending spectacle before the people. **For a sign and wonder**—Especially in relation to Egypt and Ethiopia, on which the people of Judah relied for defence, whenever Assyria’s armies, moving Egyptward, should also menace Jerusalem.

4, 5. So—Thus, in like manner, as the prophet in his comparative nakedness. **Shall the king of Assyria**—In this expedition Assyria’s success is assured by the prophet. Precisely when this occurred is not easy to settle, as some imagine. Not even Rawlinson, in his *Five Great Monarchies*,

even with *their* buttocks uncovered, to the ^ashame of Egypt. **5** ¹And they shall be afraid and ashamed of Ethiopia their expectation, and of Egypt their glory. **6** And the inhabitant of this ²isle shall say in that day, Behold, such ³is our expectation, whither we flee for help to be delivered from the king of Assyria: and how shall we escape?

CHAPTER XXI.

THE burden of the desert of the sea. As ^awhirlwinds in the south pass

10. 4; ch. 3. 17; Jer. 13. 22, 28; Mic. 1. 11.—³ Heb. *nakedness*.—² 2 Kin. 18. 21; ch. 3. 3, 5, 7; 35. 6.
—⁴ Or, *country*, Jer. 47. 4.—^a Zech. 9. 14.

vol. ii, page 416, (which see,) does this satisfactorily. Nor is it, as regards *prophecy*, very material. **Lead away the Egyptians prisoners . . . Ethiopians captives**—This picture of naked captives taken in war, is found on the monuments in Egypt. See chapter xlvii, 2, 3; also Nahum iii, 5, 8, 9. The doctrine of the prophecy is: Vain is the reliance of Judah on Egypt and Ethiopia.

6. Of this isle—This coastland from Gaza to Phenicia, and northward, how insignificant this compared with the thousand miles up the Nile covered by the great powers of Egypt and Ethiopia combined, on which Judah depended for help. Judah can now see her land all open as a foraging highway region for the conquering Assyrians, who are only too ready to take revenge for her alliance with the conquered countries. Well may the people cry out, **How shall we escape?** “We?” “We know the barbarities of war. We know the retributions laid on conquered dependants.” Nevertheless, during these direful wars, Jehovah did in considerable measure interfere for Jerusalem, on account of the theocratic fidelity of pious Hezekiah. See chapter xxxvii.

CHAPTER XXI.

The chapter seems to contain three prophecies, with headings corresponding. The first relates to Babylon, which, though then at the height of its power, is foreseen to be near its downfall.

1. The desert of the sea—Baby-

through; so it cometh from the desert, from a terrible land. **2** A ¹grievous vision is declared unto me; ²The treacherous dealer dealeth treacherously, and the spoiler spoileth. ³Go up, O Elam: besiege, O Media: all the sighing thereof have I made to cease. **3** Therefore ⁴are my loins filled with pain: ⁵pangs have taken hold upon me, as the pangs

¹ Heb. *hard*.—² Ch. 33. 1.—³ Ch. 13. 17; Jer. 49. 34.—⁴ Chap. 15. 5; 16. 11.

lon lay on an extended plain of its own, and this was contiguous to the great desert of Arabia on the southwest, from which violent winds often rush. Artificial checks preserved the Euphrates from becoming a sea in its overflowings, like the Nile during its inundations. The word "desert" seems to be used in anticipation of what this great plain will become in the fall of Babylon, when all the embankments of the great river shall be removed. **Terrible land**—This, according to verse 2, is Persia and Media. Media, especially "terrible," because of its wild mountain warriors. A rush of these is to be made upon Babylon, like to the hurricanes from the southern deserts.

2. A grievous vision—A sad and most afflictive prophetic view is shown. **The treacherous dealer**—Babylonian tyranny overreaches itself in its cruelties. **Go up, O Elam: besiege, O Media**—Persia and Media are summoned to execute terrible judgment upon the insolent empire. God ordains that the sighs of the oppressed shall cease. This prophecy is uttered probably two centuries before its fulfilment.

3. 4. Loins filled with pain—In these verses is described the experiences of a mind frenzied by a prospective view of Babylonian wrongs. The words here, taking full effect upon the reader, make him not merely to sympathize with the prophet—he in a measure feels the pains of the prophet.

5. The scene of the wildest agitation continues, but it is not unsystematic and insane. There is brevity, rapidity, life, and system in the description. **Prepare the table, watch**

of a woman that travaileth: I was bowed down at the hearing of it; I was dismayed at the seeing of it. **4** ²My heart panted, fearfulness affrighted me: the night of my pleasure hath he ³turned into fear unto me. **5** ⁵Prepare the table, watch in the watchtower, eat, drink: arise, ye princes, and anoint the shield. **6** For thus hath the Lord said

² Chap. 13. 8.—³ Or, *My mind wandered*.—⁵ Deut. 28. 67.—³ Heb. *put*.—⁵ Dan. 5. 5.

in the watchtower, eat, drink—
This is addressed to the Babylonians.



WATCHTOWER.

The phrase "watch," etc., is better rendered, *Spread the carpets*. It describes a banquet scene. However, the usual guard is probably around, and an alarm may have been sounded. **Arise, ye princes**—Princes of Persia and Media—address, as it were, of the prophet. **Anoint the shield**—Besmear the "shield," a practice among the ancients, to aid the glancing off of lances and arrows. See VIRGIL'S *Eneid*, vii, 626: "Pars leves clypeos . . . arvinâ pingui"—*shields smooth with fat oil*. This was practiced, some say, for the preservation of the leather.

unto me, Go, set a watchman, let him declare what he seeth. **7^h** And he saw a chariot *with* a couple of horsemen, a chariot of asses, *and* a chariot of camels: and he hearkened diligently with much heed: **8** And ⁴he cried, A lion: My lord, I stand continually upon the ¹ watchtower in the daytime, and I am set in my ward ⁵ whole nights: **■** And,

h Verse 9.—*4* Or, *cried as a lion*.—*i* Hab. 2. 1.—*5* Or, *every night*.—*k* Jer. 51. 8; Rev.

6. Go, set a watchman—As if a degree of languor was already coming on the scene. The watchman, to look, apparently, into the distance, then to report the on-coming of Persian troops, and of successive events of the war upon Babylon.

7. Chariot...horsemen...asses...camels—The first report is, the approach of a long procession, headed by horsemen, seen in perspective as two, a column of two, or two abreast, then successions of chariots drawn by asses and camels, which animals were used in ancient campaigns for different purposes, as both Herodotus and Xenophon testify of the Persians. (Xenophon, *Cyrop.*, iv, 3.) They not only carried baggage and provisions, but were taken into battle to throw the enemy into confusion by fright, etc. The watchman not only saw, but he listened—listened with intense listening; yet he heard nothing, so still was the approach.

8. And he cried, A lion—This may mean that the appearance in the distance was formidable enough to be represented under the figure of “a lion;” or, more probably, it means that from long listening with no result, but rather, perhaps, even the vanishing away for a time of the processions before seen, the watchman himself, impatient at fruitless results, cries out, as with a lion’s voice, that is, roars or growls out, “Lord, I stand every moment watching, day and night, but see nothing more than this inexplicable procession, and scarcely

behold, here cometh a chariot of men, *with* a couple of horsemen. And he answered and said, ⁶Babylon is fallen, is fallen; and ¹all the graven images of her gods he hath broken unto the ground. **10^m** O my threshing, and the ⁶corn of my floor: that which I have heard of the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, have I declared unto you.

14. 8; 18. 2.—*7* Chap. 46. 1; Jer. 50. 2; 51. 44.—*m* Jer. 51. 33.—*6* Heb. *son*.

that at present.” The watchman was not necessarily at Babylon, but probably near it.

9. But soon his complaint is hushed, and then bursts on his view the cavalcade, coming as it were from out of Babylon itself, shouting, **Babylon is fallen, is fallen.** This is Delitzsch’s explanation, who says of this part of the scene: “It is now clear enough where the procession went to when it disappeared. It had entered Babylon, made itself master of the city, and established itself there, and afterward came forth announcing the downfall.” This is ingenious, and neither the grammar nor the rhetoric of the passage is adverse to such an explanation. That Cyrus was to act as the anointed of Jehovah in this scene is more fully stated in chaps. xli, 2, 3; xlv, 1. And the scene here in effect repeats the facts prophesied of in chapter xiii.

10. My threshing—My crushingly oppressed ones; a sympathetic utterance from the prophet for his chastised brethren. Now appears the bearing this prophecy has on the Lord’s people. **Corn of my floor**—Rather, *son* or *child* of my threshing-floor, the sanctified results of a long



THRESHING GRAIN.

disciplinary affliction. The captivity in Babylon was the judicial separation

11 "The burden of Dumah. He calleth to me out of Seir, Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night? **12** The watchman said, The morning cometh, and also the night: if ye will inquire, inquire ye: return, come.

13 "The burden upon Arabia. In

p 1 Chron. 1. 30; Jer. 49. 7, 8; Ezekiel 35. 2; Obad. 1.—*o* Jer. 49. 28.

of grains and husks in Israel. Babylon was the threshing floor of God; love now restrains the wrath. **That which I have heard**—The revelation from God in relation to Israel's sore providential handling. **Declared unto you**—Is now made all clear.

11, 12. These verses contain a single prophecy, one entirely distinct from all others. **Burden of Dumah**—Strictly, "Dumah" means silence. The word is used here probably as emblematic of the long silence that is to come over Edom and its capital, and hence here means Edom. **He calleth to me out of Seir**—"Seir" was the mountainous tract of Edom. In a rocky defile within this mountainous tract was the capital city, Sela; a name taken from its houses, temples, sepulchres, etc., being cut out of the rocky mountain sides. Its later name was Petra, noticed in chap. xviii. The call is, as it were, to one stationed on a watchtower at a distance, not improbably at Jerusalem. **Watchman, what of the night**—From urgent anxiety the question is repeated. Edom never had kindly feeling toward Israel. Hatred dates back to Esau and his descendants. It was shown in its denial to Israel of a passage through Edom to the land of Canaan. See Num. xx, 17, 18. The question may be a taunt to Judah in ideal affliction during a foreseen captivity, when its city is desolate, and its people are at Babylon; or it may be an agonizing inquiry in Edom's own behalf. **The morning cometh**—The answer appears as if it were the latter. "The morning cometh, and also the night." Edom has a short prospect of a returning day of prosperity, but a night, a long night, of adversity, is soon to succeed it.

the forest in Arabia shall ye lodge, O ye travelling companies ^p of Dedanim. **14** The inhabitants of the land of Tema brought water to him that was thirsty, they prevented with their bread him that fled. **15** For they fled ^s from the swords, from the drawn sword, and from the bent bow, and from the griev-

p 1 Chron. 1. 9, 32.—⁷ Or, *bring ye*.—⁸ Or, *for fear*. Heb. *from the face*.

How faithfully true in Edom's history! The Assyrian period darkened it. The Chaldean, the Grecian, the Roman, followed each other. Then the light of Edom went out forever: its very capital was unknown for ages till discovered in this our own century. Nevertheless, the watchman's word encourages. **If ye will inquire** after the true Jehovah, **inquire ye**; inquire at once, your chance is not lost. **Return, come**—Repent, seek, and regain at least your spiritual birthright. The oracle, like the Gospel to impenitent sinners, closes with a yearning entreaty.

13-15. Burden upon Arabia—On critical grounds, both Ewald and Delitzsch make it doubtful that Arabia, as a whole, is meant, but rather think that the oracle relates to the sandy desert, the Arabah, the region over which the ancient caravan trade was carried. Their opinion is not simply plausible, it is reasonable. It is still Arabia, though a specific part. The caravans are called **Dedanim**, a mixture of Cushites and Ishmaelites. Their roads or camel routes to and from Tyre, and probably Gaza, are invaded by a foreign force, possibly the Assyrian, in its foraging parties, as the army passes toward Egypt or toward Tyre; and the caravans are dispersed from their accustomed track of travel far out into inhospitable deserts. **Forest**—Forests, properly so-called, do not exist in Arabia. In wide and moist wadies thickets grow, and in these the caravans could conceal themselves when pursued.

14. Tema—If this place has been identified, as is claimed, it lay on the present pilgrim road from Damascus to Mecca. Its people are commanded to supply provisions to the caravans,

ousness of war. **16** For thus hath the Lord said unto me, Within a year, ^a according to the years of a hireling, and all the glory of ^b Kedar shall fail: **17** And the residue of the number of ^c archers, the mighty men of the children of Kedar, shall be diminished: for the Lord God of Israel hath spoken it.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE burden of the valley of vision. What aileth thee now, that thou art wholly gone up to the housetops? **2** Thou that art full of stirs, a tumultuous city, ^a a joyous city: thy slain ^b men are not slain with the sword, nor dead

^a Chap. 16, 14. — ^b Psa. 120, 5; chap. 60, 7. — ^c Heb. bows. — ^d Chap. 32, 13. — ^e 1 Heb. of the bow. — ^f Jer. 4, 19; 9, 1. — ^g 2 Heb. I will be

who were fleeing from "the drawn sword, the bent bow, and the grievousness of war."

16. Years of a hireling—The desert carriers had probably become rich, and plunder was the object of assaults upon them. The prophet sees that God is to permit them, that is, **Kedar**—the representative term for all Arabian carriers—to be impoverished. These, and all their glory of wealth and protective guards are to be ruined **within a year**, as the hireling figure runs—hired for one year.

CHAPTER XXII.

This prophecy is against the carnal security and heathenish hilarity of the people in Jerusalem at a time (or at several times, for many believe the prophecy to be generic, appropriate to several perilous conditions) when a serious siege is about to occur. Its place here, among prophecies against the heathen proper, is due to the fact that the people as a whole take on essentially the heathen character.

1. Valley of vision—Jerusalem itself, the seat of prophecy, the residence of Isaiah and his school of disciples. It is called a "valley" because, though on hills, it is surrounded by hills higher than itself; and because on three sides valleys steeply sloping to the city run into one running to the Dead Sea eastward. **What aileth thee**—A question occasioned by revel-

in battle. **3** All thy rulers are fled together, they are bound ^a by the archers: all that are found in thee are bound together, ^b which have fled from far. **4** Therefore said I, Look away from me; ^c I will weep bitterly, labour not to comfort me, because of the spoiling of the daughter of my people. **5** ^d For it is a day of trouble, and of treading down, and of perplexity ^e by the Lord God of hosts in the valley of vision, breaking down the walls, and of crying to the mountains. **6** ^f And Elam bare the quiver with chariots of men and horsemen, and ^g Kir ^h uncovered the shield. **7** And it shall come to pass,

bitter in weeping. — ^c Chap. 37, 3. — ^d ar. 1, 5; 2, 2. — ^e Jer. 49, 35. — ^f Chap. 15, — ^g 3 Heb. made naked.

ry resounding from all the housetops in a time of real peril, and this, from a daring, defiant sense of security. The question is a rebuke. The house-tops were flat, and used as places of resort.

2. Thy slain men—Or, men destined to perish, as the prophet sees a dire siege at hand. **Not slain with the sword**—Not to have this honour. They will die inside, not in battle; or, they will die as captives, far away.

3. Thy rulers are fled—This verse describes conquest and captivity.

4, 5. Therefore . . . Look away from me—Advice to let the prophet alone, to obtrude not on his sorrow. No consolation can reach him. **Daughter of my people**—Inhabitants of Jerusalem. **Trouble . . . treading down . . . perplexity**—Mental anguish extreme to the prophet, while the thoughtless people are insensible to coming woes. Terrible day in prospect, but Jehovah sends it as the last recourse with a view to correction. **Crying**—Wails which reach to and echo back from the **mountains**, allusive of the valley whence they come.

6, 7. Elam—Not Persia, as a whole, but a district within it, supplying soldiers that used the bow. **Kir**—A province in Assyria on the river Kuros, which furnished men with lances and shields, (shields were in cases when not used.) However, Rawlinson locates "Kir" near the mouths of the Euphrates and of the Tigris.

that ⁴thy choicest valleys shall be full of chariots, and the horsemen shall set themselves in array ⁵at the gate.

8 And he discovered the covering of Judah, and thou didst look in that day to the armour ⁹of the house of the forest. ⁹^h Ye have seen also the breaches of the city of David, that they are many: and ye gathered together the waters of the lower pool. ¹⁰ And ye have numbered the houses of Jerusalem, and the houses have ye broken down to fortify the wall. ¹¹ⁱ Ye made also a ditch between the two walls for the water of the old pool: but ye have not looked unto

⁴ Heb. *the choice of thy valleys*.—⁵ Or, *town*.—⁹ 1 Kings 7. 2; 10. 17.—^h 2 Kings 20. 20; 2 Chron. 32. 4, 5, 30.—ⁱ Neh. 3. 16.—^k See chap. 37. 26.

In either case, the siege of this chapter may be that of Nebuchadnezzar, B. C. 605, or it may cover the character of several sieges, then future to Isaiah. **Thy choicest valleys**—That is, those passable to chariots near Jerusalem. These were Rephaim on the south, and the plateau north.

8-11. **He discovered the covering of Judah**—"He" is indefinite, but from the verses following it is quite evident that it refers to the Jews. The expression means, "The covering of Judah was removed." The Jews become conscious of their own condition, and are alarmed. **Look...to the armour**—To the arsenal of shields, etc., in the **house of the forest**, so named from its Lebanon cedars of which it was made. **Breaches**—They look also to the bad condition of the walls, and to gathering from the outside lower pool adequate water supplies in the city. **Numbered the houses**—To see which can best be spared to take down, the stone to be used for repairing the walls. Estimating expenses and assorting materials for wall building may have had something to do with this numbering. **Between the two walls**—Or, pair of walls. This must mean that a basin was formed for collecting additional waters, a parallel wall to one then standing being reared for it. **Old pool**—The upper Gihon, probably three fourths of a mile outside, west, and

^k the maker thereof, neither had respect unto him that fashioned it long ago. ¹² And in that day did the Lord God of hosts ^lcall to weeping, and to mourning, and ^mto baldness, and to girding with sackcloth: ¹³ And behold joy and gladness, slaying oxen, and killing sheep, eating flesh, and drinking wine: "let us eat and drink; for to-morrow we shall die. ¹⁴^o And it was revealed in mine ears by the Lord of hosts, Surely this iniquity ^pshall not be purged from you till ye die, saith the Lord God of hosts.

¹⁵ Thus saith the Lord God of hosts,

^l Joel 1. 13.—^m See Ezra 9. 3; chapter 15. 2; Micah 1. 16.—ⁿ Chapter 56. 12; 1 Corinthians 15. 32.—^o Chapter 5. 9.—^p 1 Samuel 3. 14; Ezekiel 24. 13.

higher than the city within the walls. To all these preparations the Jews looked, on awaking to their condition. But **unto the maker...him that fashioned**, etc.—They did not look. These words are to be taken as poetical equivalents for the Efficient Cause of all things. They were looking to arsenals, etc., but not to God. Long ago had God foreseen this, and ordered such a siege to punish and correct the Jews.

12-14. And now God calls to repentance, **to weeping...to mourning...to baldness**, etc.—Signs, all of them, of bitter repentance. But the people have gone too far into error of life to obey. The prophecy seems to touch on the last days of the kingdom; for though repentance is commanded, no promise, no consolation is offered, and the people seem incredulous; certainly they show no desire to obey, for the prophet sees them either confident still of security, or else thinking their situation a lost one, and so they rollic in heathenish revelry, and say, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." This piece of prophecy seems thus far really generic, embracing points applicable to all the sieges the Jews endured. Yet the 14th verse can scarcely apply to any other than the last one suffered by that people as a kingdom.

15, 16. The "Burden" now passes from the character of the people to that of chief individuals, and of their

Go, get thee unto this treasurer, *even* unto "Shebna," which *is* over the house, *and say*, 16 What hast thou here, and whom hast thou here, that thou hast hewed thee out a sepulchre here, *as* he *that heweth him out a sepulchre on high, *and* that graveth a habitation for himself in a rock? 17 Behold, *the Lord will carry thee away with *a mighty captivity, *and* will surely cover thee. 18 He will surely violently turn and toss thee *like* a ball into a *large country: there shalt thou die, and there the chariots of thy glory *shall be* the shame of thy lord's house. 19 And I will drive thee from thy station, and from thy state shall he pull thee down. 20 And it shall come to pass in that

q 2 Kings 18. 37; chap. 36. 3. — r 1 Kings 4. 6.
—s Or, *O* he. — t 2 Sam. 18. 18; Matt. 27. 60.
—u Or, *the LORD* who covered thee with
an excellent covering, and clothed thee gor-

day, that I will call my servant "Eliakim the son of Hilkiah: 21 And I will clothe him with thy robe, and strengthen him with thy girdle, and I will commit thy government into his hand: and he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah. 22 And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall *open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open. 23 And I will fasten him *as* *a nail in a sure place; and he shall be for a glorious throne to his father's house. 24 And they shall hang upon him all the glory of his father's house, the offspring and the issue, all vessels of small quantity, from the vessels of cups, even

geously, shall surely, etc. Verse 18. — s Heb. *the captivity of a man.* — t Esther 7. 8. — u Heb. *large of spaces.* — v 2 Kings 18. 18. — w Job 12. 14; Rev. 3. 7. — x Ezra 9. 8.

characters in contrast. **Unto Shebna**—This is not a person's name, but an official title; not that of **treasurer**, for the original means, *dear friend*, but that of prefect of the palace—**over the house**. The name appears again in chap. xxxvi, 3, thus making this prophecy to apply in part to Hezekiah's time. **What hast thou here... whom**, etc.—What right, what claims, for making a family sepulchre in Jerusalem? The tone of the questions implies that this officer was a foreigner as well as a wicked man, using also, quite probably, the public funds for a personal object. **Sepulchre on high**—At a height in a cliff, to be secure from depredation; hence an extravagant and presumptuous use of public funds.

17-19. **Behold**—The doom of this faithless heathen officer, also a leader away of the people, now follows. **Carry thee...mighty captivity**—The words of these verses are violent words, and indicate sharp, indignant, violent feeling and action in executing punishment upon this man. There is scarce power in any language to translate them. **Cover thee**—Wrap thee up, (as by straps and thongs.) **Violently turn and toss thee**—Some translate: "Bind thee with head band into a ball, then whirl thee round and round and cast thee away." **Into a large country**—Perhaps As-

syria; there is nothing certain as to what country is meant. The Jewish comment is, that Shebna was tied, as a traitor, to horses' tails in Assyria, and so died.

20-23. **I will call my servant**—A very different character enters Shebna's place in the person of Eliakim, a native Jew, because his father's name is given, which was not done in the other case. He is invested with the **robe**—badge of authority; and the **girdle**—in which was the purse, and from which the sword was suspended; also the **key** hung over the shoulder—denoting civil authority next to the king himself. Chap. ix, 6. In his administration he is truly **father** to all the people.

24. **I will fasten...as a nail**—As a peg or spike fastened in the wall in Oriental houses, on which family ornaments were suspended. The sense is, all that is valuable to the nation rests on him. **Glorious throne to his father's house**—It seems idle to suppose, with Delitzsch, that here begins an intimation of Eliakim's gradual fall from his integrity to the government by observing nepotism in appointing his relatives only to offices. The expression rather indicates fidelity. He is to the government as the tentpin in a strong setting, or nail firmly fixed in the wall. He is the faithful prefect of the house, the palace; the

to all the ¹⁰vessels of flagons. **25** In that day, saith the Lord of hosts, shall the nail that is fastened in the sure place be removed, and be cut down, and fall; and the burden that *was* upon it shall be cut off: for the Lord hath spoken *it*.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE ^aburden of Tyre. Howl, ye ships of Tarshish; for it is laid waste, so that there is no house, no entering in: ^bfrom the land of Chittim it

¹⁰ Or. *instruments of viols.*—^a Jer. 25. 22; 47. 4; Ezek. chaps. 26-28; Amos 1. 9; Zech. 9. 2, 4.

seat whence issue all government advices.

25. Shall the nail...fall—Delitzsch, of course, supposes the reference here is to Eliakim, and grammatical considerations are on his side. But the altogether better logical view is, that of an abrupt return (not without like examples with Isaiah) to the treasurer, who was a failure in the government, a heathen, without doubt, smuggled into office probably by the heathenish Ahaz, and unfortunately retained in office by pious Hezekiah, till, in the order of divine providence, he was ignominiously thrust out.

CHAPTER XXIII.

BURDEN OF TYRE.

This is the last of the prophecies by Isaiah relating to the heathen. Tyre and Zidon, cities of Phœnicia, were associated, being only twenty miles apart. Tyre was the chief city, the commercial mart of the world, at that time. By her maritime wealth she had become proud and oppressive. She cultivated base idolatries, and thus needed reproof such as this prediction offers.

A slight notice of Tyre's history and fate must suffice. Sieges against her were made by different enemies: by Shalmanezzer B. C. 720, without success; by Nebuchadnezzar, with no known result; by Alexander, with temporary conquest, though he struck gradual death into her commerce when he built Alexandria; finally by the Saracens in 1290. Much of the chapter will be hard of explanation unless scope

is revealed to them. **2** Be ¹still, ye inhabitants of the isle; thou whom the merchants of Zidon, that pass over the sea, have replenished. **■** And by great waters the seed of Sihor, the harvest of the river, is her revenue; and ^eshe is a mart of nations. **4** Be thou ashamed, O Zidon: for the sea hath spoken, *even* the strength of the sea, saying, "I travail not, nor bring forth children, neither do I nourish up young men, *nor* bring up virgins. **5** ^eAs at the report concerning

^b Verse 12.—¹ Heb. *silent.*—^c Ezek. 27. 3.—^d Jer. 47. 3, 4; Ezek. 26. 3, 6; Hag. 11. 14.—^e Chap. 19. 16.

for the fulfilment of its prediction be assumed.

1. Ships of Tarshish—The Mediterranean fleet, especially the larger vessels which plied between the Phœnician coast (for all cities and towns on the coast were sea-faring,) and Tartessus in Spain. **Is laid waste**—This is spoken of Tyre. It is so seen in vision. **From...Chittim it is revealed**—Cyprus, or *Citium*, a chief port in Cyprus. The vision takes in seamen returning and hearing from the colony at Cyprus bad news of Tyre.

2. Be still—Or, dumb with astonishment. **Isle**—In Hebrew, this word applies to the coast, whether of island or mainland. Therefore, the inhabitants of the towns on the Mediterranean are here addressed, who were enriched by commerce with Phœnicia. Zidon was a city of honour, not because greater, but because more ancient, than Tyre.

3. By great waters—Across the sea to Egypt. The grain of the Nile land (called here **Sihor**, *black*, the black deposits of yearly fertile mud) is Tyre's revenue. Egypt was the great emporium of the nations.

4. Ashamed—Zidon, or the whole Zidonian coast, is called to be confounded, *mortified*, because the **sea... the strength of the sea**, or Tyre—the rock fortress of the sea, the sea's objective point in commerce—has waned in population because of wars, and she is for the future as good as barren.

5. Concerning Egypt—The translation seems better thus: "At what

Egypt, so shall they be sorely pained at the report of Tyre. **6** Pass ye over to Tarshish; howl, ye inhabitants of the isle. **7** Is this your 'joyous city, whose antiquity is of ancient days? her own feet shall carry her ²afar off to sojourn. **8** Who hath taken this counsel against Tyre, ⁵the crowning city, whose merchants are princes, whose traffickers are the honourable of the earth? **9** The LORD of hosts hath purposed it, ³to stain the pride of all glory, and to bring into contempt all the honourable of the

^f Chapter 22. 2. — ² Heb. from afar off. — ^g See Ezek. 28. 2, 12. — ³ Heb. to pollute. — ⁴ Heb. girdle.

time the report cometh to Egypt they shall bewail at the report of Tyre." For the loss of Tyre is the loss of Egypt's market for her products.

6. Tarshish — Tyre's remote colonies, especially Tartessus, near the Straits of Gibraltar. In the stress upon Tyre her people are advised to seek refuge there. The siege by Nebuchadnezzar, and still more by Alexander, was sufficient occasion for such advice.

7. Joyous city...ancient days — The question form here is from poetic fervour. Joyousness is supposed to imply luxury, recklessness, and pride of antiquity. Undisturbed prosperity for many years made them exultant and even arrogant. **Feet...carry** — Tropically, cities are sometimes called mothers, and Tyre is presented here as wandering (by means of ships) to her far-off children. For history of the Phœnicians see Smith's Bible Dictionary, Kenrick, Renan, and others.

8, 9. Who hath taken...counsel — Of whose purpose come results such as these upon great Tyre? Is it possible any one can bring such things about? The irony is withering, yet solemn and stately. Jehovah, to stain the glory of man—not at Tyre alone—hath done it. So always. **The honourable** — Solid men and families, as society calls them, sooner or later come down.

10. Pass through...as a river — As freely as a river flows, overflows, and rushes, so let the population go hence. **Daughter of Tarshish** — De-

earth. **10** Pass through thy land as a river, O daughter of Tarshish: there is no more ⁴strength. **11** He stretched out his hand over the sea, he shook the kingdoms: the LORD hath given a commandment ⁶against ⁶the merchant city, to destroy the ⁷strong holds thereof. **12** And he said, ⁵Thou shalt no more rejoice, O thou oppressed virgin, daughter of Zidon: arise, ¹pass over to Chittim; there also shalt thou have no rest. **13** Behold the land of the Chaldeans; this people was not, till the Assyrian

⁵ Or, concerning a merchantman. — ⁶ Heb. Canaan. — ⁷ Or, strengths. — ^h Rev. 18. 23. — ⁱ Verse 1.

pendent, henceforth, on the colonies for existence and a home. **No more strength** — Girdle is the word—a figure of strength. No more home girding of the loins or fortifications. The cincture of beauty and strength is gone from Tyre.

11. He stretched out his hand — The subject of the verb is Jehovah. The gesture here, quite a common representation with Isaiah, intends punishment and correction. **Over the sea** — Over the domain of Tyrian commerce, more especially Phœnician cities on the sea. **Shook the kingdoms** — The whole of Phœnicia, by means of noted warriors whose selfish aims at conquest were divinely overruled for correction.

12. He said — Jehovah said, as in verse 9. **No more rejoice** — Because doomed to be crippled; yes, nearly destroyed. **Daughter of Zidon** — Zidon was the older city, hence addressed as the mother city. **To Chittim** — To Tyrian colonies in Cyprus. Yet even there they would find no rest, because too near and too accessible to the conquering power.

13. Behold — Something important to be said. **Land of the Chaldeans** — Originally these were wild tribes in the mountains of Armenia. (Gesenius.) **Was not** — Had no existence as an organized nation. **Till the Assyrian founded it** — That is, transplanted colonies of them on the plains of Babylonia. If this be the meaning, the event was in the very earliest days of Assyrian power and conquest, and remnants of those ancient tribes

founded it for ^a them that dwell in the wilderness: they set up the towers thereof; they raised up the palaces thereof; and he brought it to ruin.

14 ¹Howl, ye ships of Tarshish: for your strength is laid waste. **15** And it shall come to pass in that day, that Tyre shall be forgotten seventy years, according to the days of one king: after the end of seventy years ^a shall Tyre sing as a harlot. **16** Take a harp, go about the city, thou harlot that hast been forgotten; make sweet melody, sing many

songs, that thou mayest be remembered.

17 And it shall come to pass after the end of seventy years, that the LORD will visit Tyre, and she shall turn to her hire, and ^m shall commit fornication with all the kingdoms of the world upon the face of the earth. **18** And her merchandise and her hire ^a shall be holiness to the LORD: it shall not be treasured nor laid up; for her merchandise shall be for them that dwell before the LORD, to eat sufficiently, and for ^a durable clothing.

k Psa. 72. 9.—*l* Verse 1; Ezek. 27. 25, 30.—*h* Heb. *it shall be unto Tyre as the song of a*

harlot.—*m* Rev. 17. 2.—*n* Zech. 14. 20, 21.—^a *9* Heb. *old*.

have survived to this day under the name of Koords. Xenophon, in his *Anabasis*, says these primitive tribes followed a nomadic life in Armenia. By some they are held to be of Cushite origin. **Set up... towers**

...raised... palaces—They established, or were blended in with, Babylonian civilization, and became, under Nebuchadnezzar, warriors to set up siege "towers" in Tyre and to destroy her "palaces." **He**—The Chaldean general and army. Though the results of that siege are not historically known, this verse declares the city crippled, and for the time being destroyed; destroyed beyond immediate regain of her old prestige.

14, 15. Tyre shall be forgotten seventy years—Shall be of comparatively no account as an object for reconquest. "Seventy years" is a compact series of decades, denoting at least a full long time; possibly, the figure here is a symbol for the period of a strong dynasty. Prophetic vision takes in things as wholes, be they as to periods longer or shorter. Historically there was nothing to hinder Tyre going on in her commerce, in unostentatious ways, under the Persian rule, till Alexander arose, some two hundred years later than Nebuchadnezzar. Alexander then attacked Tyre, but completed the ruin of her and her commerce more by establishing a great commercial rival, the city of Alexandria, in the western delta of the Nile, B. C. 332, than by his mere conquest of the city.

16. Take a harp—This verse indi-

cates the continuance of the city, but so humbled, that, to make herself believe that she is something like her former self, she is told to put on extra simulations—to sing, play the harp, and make a big show of happiness and prosperity.

17. After... seventy years—Return of commercial prosperity is here really promised after a time, and she is again to make a large figure in the world. **Commit fornication**—Why is this figure so much used by our prophet? Because harlotry and whoredom were terms applied to idolatry, and expressed the extreme contempt felt by the pious Jews for that abomination. In her coming again into prosperity Tyre would reenact her old practices. **The Lord will visit Tyre**—Under divine providential auspices she is to become rich again, but, through her own renewed excesses, to be only again doomed to more overwhelming calamity.

18. Her merchandise... be holiness to the Lord—The diffusion of the good seed of Messianic truths must produce not a little fruit among the Phœnician populations. Christ in a solitary mission there found the soil good for scattering that seed. Seagoing communication to all parts of the Gentile world was another overruled result of Tyrian commerce to carry the Gospel messengers to far off ports. The trade of commerce, first learned in Phœnicia, is now transferred to all parts of the world. All men are made near neighbours by means of it. See chapter lx.

CHAPTER XXIV.

BEHOLD, the LORD maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and ¹turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof. **2** And it shall be, as with the people, so with the ²priest; ^a as with the servant, so with his master; as with the maid, so with her mistress; ^b as with the buyer, so with the seller; as with the lender, so with the borrower; as with the taker of usury, so with the giver of usury to him. **3** ^cThe land shall be utterly emptied, and utterly spoiled: for the LORD hath spoken this word. **4** The earth mourneth and fadeth away, the world languisheth and fadeth away, ^dthe haughty people of the earth do lan-

¹ Heb. *perverteth the face thereof*.—² Or, *prince*.—^a Hosea 4. 9.—^b Ezek. 7. 12, 13.—^c Lev. 26. 30, 33; Deut. 29. 23, 28; 2 Chron. 36. 21; Ezek. 36. 4.—^d Heb. *the height of the people*.

PART IV.

An Apocalyptic Section of Prophecy, chapters xxiv-xxvii.

CHAPTER XXIV.

INTRODUCTORY.

The four following chapters (xxiv-xxvii) apparently treat of the last things to Judah, and, comprehensively, of the whole old dispensation. After prophecies against all the nations thus far treated, it forms an appropriate apocalyptic sequel to the series commencing with chapter xiii and closing with chapter xxiii. Those who deny the supernatural in prophecy, deny, of course, authorship here to Isaiah; but they cannot determine, or even plausibly suggest, by whom, for what, and when, this series of pieces was written, all of which differ from each other in some marked particulars. Calvin, Lowth, and Alexander think the prophecy is best explained by considering it as generally covering Judah's entire bad fortunes, followed by judgments to the wicked, and by the predictions concerning the glorious period of Messiah and the Gospel.

1. Behold—Here, as always with Isaiah, pointing to something future. **The earth**—The land of Judah. The prophet plunges into the midst of his subject, seizes its radical idea, and makes it an emblem here of far off events; as it were, those appertain-

guish. **5** ^aThe earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. **6** Therefore hath ^bthe curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate: therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left. **7** ^cThe new wine mourneth, the vine languisheth, all the merry-hearted do sigh. **8** The mirth ^dof tabrets ceaseth, the noise of them that rejoice endeth, the joy of the harp ceaseth. **9** They shall not drink wine with a song; strong drink shall be bitter to them that drink it. **10** The city ^eof confusion is broken down: every house is shut up, that no man may come in.

^d Gen. 3. 17; Num. 35. 33.—^e Mal. 4. 6.—^f Chap. 16. 8, 9; Joel 1. 10, 12.—^g Jer. 7. 34; 16. 9; 25. 10; Ezekiel 26. 13; Hosea 2. 11; Rev. 18. 22.—^h Gen. 11. 9; Jer. 9. 25, 26.

ing to the last days. The subject here is *judgment*.

2. As with the people, so with the priest; as...so, etc.—Judgment is entered upon all alike. There is no favoured class. All fall under the one doom, which is utter and final.

3, 4. The earth—אֶרֶץ, (*aretz*), *earth*, or *land*, occurs over twelve times in this chapter, and applies to the whole land of Israel. But its parallel, תֵּבֶל, (*tebel*),

the inhabited world, may apply to all known nations. **Haughty people**—High in social position and proud in spirit. Princes, alike with the lower classes, have no escape.

5. The earth...is defiled—The land consecrated to Jehovah is profaned by practices of the people.

6. Therefore hath the curse—The prophecy moves on from sin to punishment. The curses denounced (see Deut. xxvii and xxviii) fall upon transgressors. If the term *earth* covers the land of Israel and more, the law covers commands revealed and commands of conscience; it is alike the law written and unwritten.

7-9. New wine mourneth—Chapter v, 11. Sensuality is personified to intensify the felt sense of misery. Exhilaration fails; charms of music are quenched; there is gall to the taste; amusement mocks.

10. City of confusion—"Confusion,"

11 *There is a crying for wine in the streets; all joy is darkened, the mirth of the land is gone.* **12** *In the city is left desolation, and the gate is smitten with destruction.*

13 *When thus it shall be in the midst of the land among the people, ¹there shall be as the shaking of an olive tree, and as the gleanings of grapes when the vintage is done.* **14** *They shall lift up their voice, they shall sing for the maj-*

i Chapter 17. 5, 6. — *4* Or, *valleys*. — *k* Mal. 1. 11. — *5* Heb. *wing*.

not in respect to social order, but external unplacement; *thohu*, like that in Genesis i, 2, chaos; every thing in amorphous fragments and impalpable ruins. No house to enter, no shelter from sun or storm.

11. Crying for wine — Not to cheer, but to drown thought. Joel i, 5.

12. Desolation — Not a trace being left of the city as it was. **Gate... destruction** — The "gate" is the most noted of all city resorts; its "destruction" is a *crash*. So Gesenius.

13. The people — But little is said, up to this, about "the people." The picture of so utter a desolation is now touched up with here and there a straggler out of all the once vast population. For the comparison see chap. xvii, 5, 6, and note.

14. They shall lift up their voice — Here is another of Isaiah's lightning-like transitions. The humble gleaned ones — the remnant — the returned escaped ones, of verse 13 — the representatives of all the delivered faithful ones of Israel — the sifted and purified Church of Jehovah. **They** — In the original the pronoun is locatively emphatic, designating the righteous few as a special class. **They shall sing** — Shall celebrate by loud acclamation. **The majesty of the Lord** — In overpowering oppressors, and in bringing deliverance to the meek and true children of God — "the remnant." **They shall cry aloud** — This verb is what in Hebrew is called the preterite present. The people have shouted aloud, and do still, as a habit. The verbs preceding this are in the future present: *They, from this time on, shall cry, as a habit also.* **Cry aloud from the**

estry of the Lord, they shall cry aloud from the sea. **15** *Wherefore glorify ye the Lord in the ⁴fires, even ⁵the name of the Lord God of Israel in the isles of the sea.*

16 *From the ⁶uttermost part of the earth have we heard songs, even glory to the righteous. But I said, ⁶My leanness, my leanness, woe unto me! ¹the treacherous dealers have dealt treacherously; yea, the treacherous dealers have*

6 Heb. *Leanness to me, or, My secret to me.* — *1* Jer. 5. 11.

sea — Which may mean for deliverances from the sea, or, more than the sea; that is, than at the sea, namely, the Red Sea, under Miriam: see Exod. chap. xv; or, from the direction of the sea, that is, from the west. This last is to be preferred, as will be seen from the next verse.

15. Glorify... in the fires — This is a doubtful translation. Better, *in the east*, or, *in the regions of the east*. So lexicons by Fürst and by Gesenius. Evidently the meaning is: "Wherever ye redeemed, ye tried and delivered friends of Jehovah, come from — whether from the west (verse 14) or from the east, shout ye God's praises."

Even... isles of the sea — A poetic, but not logical, transposition. In straight prose the sense is: "All ye of the east, and all ye from the isles of the sea in the west," etc.

16. From... uttermost part of the earth — From every point of the compass, far and near, the shouts of praise are heard. The same strain continues. **But I said** — The dark side now looms up to the prophet. In the same instant that he sees glory covering the delivered ones, a new view comes to him of impending calamity on the rejected inhabitants of earth. **My leanness** — This is another rejected rendering. It should be, *Destruction to me*; that is, *Woe to me!* The Septuagint and Vulgate most unsuitably have it, *A secret to me*; mistaking the true original word. Isaiah's mind suddenly takes in a view of destruction to oppressing nations, Babylon especially, as the phrase **treacherous dealers** unerringly suggests.

17-20. The foundations... do shake

dealt very treacherously. **17** ^m Fear, and the pit, and the snare, *are* upon thee, O inhabitant of the earth. **18** And it shall come to pass, *that* he who fleeth from the noise of the fear shall fall into the pit; and he that cometh up out of the midst of the pit shall be taken in the snare: for ⁿ the windows from on high are open, and ^o the foundations of the earth do shake. **19** ^p The earth is utterly broken down, the earth is clean dissolved, the earth is moved exceedingly. **20** The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it shall fall, and not rise again. **21** And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* the Lord shall ^q punish the host of the high ones *that are* on high, ^r and the kings of the earth upon the

^m 1 Kings 19. 17; Jer. 48. 43, 44; Amos 5. 19. — ⁿ Gen. 7. 11. — ^o Psa. 18. 7. — ^p Jer. 4. 23. — ^q Chap. 19. 14. — ^r Heb. *visit upon*. — ^s Psa. 76. 12. — ^t Heb. *with the gathering of prisoners*. — ^u Or, *dungeon*. — ^v Or, *found wanting*.

—From the statement of these verses it would look as if the new view of the prophet was but a sudden shift in an ecstatic scene. The rush of invaders and the fleeing of the pursued are represented by images taken from the deluge and geologic earthquakes. The final scene is apocalyptic, and the earth is removed from existence.

21–23. In these verses the view is also apocalyptic, but the visitation is of punishment to **the host of the high ones... on high**. Rather more than possibly, this means, fallen angels, acting as guardians to evil powers on earth. The scene is too much lifted from earth to merely mean men, wicked men, distinguished for high position and pride. Alluding to the practice of conquerors with their captives, these are imprisoned—reserved for judgment. **Shall they be visited**—But probably for inevitable punishment. Whether wicked angels or wicked men are intended here, the same principle applies: wickedness cannot go unpunished. The vision is of scenes in the heavens antecedent to the day of Messiah's glory and power. In the presence of such a day all previous light is dim. The apocalyptist of the Old Testament sees here all

earth. **22** And they shall be gathered together, ^a as prisoners are gathered in the ^b pit, and shall be shut up in the prison, and after many days shall they be ^c visited. **23** Then the ^d moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of hosts shall ^e reign in ^f mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and ^g before his ancients gloriously.

CHAPTER XXV.

O LORD, thou art my God; ^a I will exalt thee, I will praise thy name; ^b for thou hast done wonderful *things*; ^c *thy* counsels of old are faithfulness and truth. **2** For thou hast made ^d of a city a heap; ^e of a defenced city a ruin: a palace of strangers to be no city; it shall never be built. **3** Therefore shall the strong people ^f glorify thee, the city of the terrible nations shall fear thee.

^a Chap. 13. 10; 60. 19; Ezek. 32. 7; Joel 2. 31; 3. 15. — ^b Rev. 19. 4. 6. — ^c Heb. 12. 22. — ^d Or, there shall be *glory before his ancients*. — ^e Exod. 15. 2; Psa. 118. 28. — ^f Psa. 98. 1. — ^g Num. 23. 19. — ^h Chap. 21. 9; 23. 13; Jer. 51. 37. — ⁱ Rev. 11. 13.

providential government condensed into one fact, namely: Jehovah enthroned in a new Jerusalem, the Messianic day, with his people surrounding him, before the light and glory of which the white moon turns red, and the glowing sun becomes pale, each being as an unperceived lamp at noon-day.

The contest of ages has revealed God's majesty, justice, and mercy; his Church planted on Zion is jubilant, and a new glory covers her.

CHAPTER XXV.

In the vision already introduced Isaiah is transported to the end of days, and commemorates in song what he has prophetically seen. But he sings not in his own name merely, but in the name also of a delivered people.

1, 2. He sings in words familiar to him from Psalms cxviii, 28; lxxvii, 15; lxxii, 12, etc.; also, from Exod. xv. 11. **For**—Sufficient occasion is it that Babylon (as the vision gives it) is destroyed. **Palace of strangers**—Either a place of traffickers from all regions, or of its own people alienated from Israel's God, or both.

3. Strong people... terrible nations—People outside of Babylon,

4 For thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, ^aa refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones ^{is} as a storm *against* the wall. **5** Thou shalt bring down the noise of strangers, as the heat in a dry place; *even* the heat with the shadow of a cloud: the branch of the terrible ones shall be brought low.

6 And in ^gthis mountain shall ^hthe Lord of hosts make unto ⁱall people a

^fChap. 4. 6.—^gChap. 2. 2, 3.—^hProv. 9. 2; Matt. 22. 4.—ⁱDaniel 7. 14; Matt. 8. 11.—¹Heb. *swallow up*.

even wild, idolatrous tribes, seeing such divine judgments on that great city, and recognising Israel's God as the avenger, shall fear Him.

4. For—Another reason for a song of triumph is, that God came down to the low estate of his own suffering people. Of this, also, shall the nations take note. The people of God in captivity are **the poor and the needy**. The figures of **heat** and the **storm** are used to indicate persecutions which God's people suffered. **Blast of the terrible ones**—These words express the violence of the persecutions from Chaldea's tyrants.

5. Noise of strangers—The roar of a battle engagement. The "strangers" are the hostile ones, probably Chaldeans, the same as the "terrible ones." **The branch**, etc., should read the *song* (strange, it was rendered "branch") **of the terrible ones**—their triumphal song of the battle. The parallelism here is peculiarly inverted and difficult. We may properly read it thus: "As heat with natural stillness comes down into a dry place, so shalt thou, Jehovah, bring down, or make more quiet, the battle roar; as heat is lessened by an overshadowing cloud, so wilt thou lessen the boasting song of victory."

6. Here begins a promise of favour to Gentiles, and the people of God from among them, united with God's true ones in Zion. **In this mountain**—Zion. Jerusalem, till now disparaged, henceforth shall be attractive to all, and by rich spiritual provisions shall nourish and exhilarate all. This

feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined. **7** And he will ¹destroy in this mountain the face of the covering ²cast over all people, and ³the veil that is spread over all nations. **8** He will ¹swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will ^mwipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the Lord hath spoken it.

²Heb. *covered*.—^k2 Cor. 3. 15; Eph. 4. 18.—^lHos. 13. 14; 1 Cor. 15. 54; Rev. 20. 14; 21. 4.—^mRev. 7. 17; 21. 4.

verse resumes the subject suspended at the close of the preceding chapter. **Unto all people**—None excluded from any part of the world. **Feast of fat things**—The figure of rich and dainty food implies the glorious provisions of salvation, just as Zion symbolizes the universal Church of God. **Wines on the lees**—A specified part of what is provided. The phrase means the oldest and choicest wines—those longest undrawn from the bottle sediment.

6. Will destroy . . . the face of the covering—The fulness of the Messianic times will remove the veil that rests on the Gentiles, hitherto living in darkness. Isa. ix. 2, 35; xlii, 6, 7; Luke i, 78, 79; Acts xxvi, 17, 18.

8. Swallow up death—Death, here, comprehends the various ills of this life, or sin and its consequences. These become, under gospel influences, of the smallest account in comparison with the glory that is, and is to be, revealed. **In victory**—This means glory, brightness, and the like, in the original; and it is to be eternal, as most versions render the word—a brightness that never ends. **Will wipe away tears**—Exegetical of the phrase preceding. (Note the comment thereon.) **Rebuke of his people**—Not rebuke deserved, but reproach undeserved, which the world casts on God's people. In the fulness of gospel times the tables shall be turned. To the saints of the Most High all that can possibly be contained in the idea of death shall be utterly done away.

9 And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this *is* our God; ^a we have waited for him, and he will save us: this *is* the Lord; we have waited for him, ^o we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation.

10 For in this mountain shall the hand of the Lord rest, and Moab shall be ³trodden down under him, even as straw is ⁴trodden down for the dunghill.

11 And he shall spread forth his hands in the midst of them, as he that swim-

meth spreadeth forth *his hands* to swim: and he shall bring down their pride together with the spoils of their hands.

12 And the ²fortress of the high fort of thy walls shall he bring down, lay low, and bring to the ground, *even* to the dust.

CHAPTER XXVI.

IN ^a that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah; We have a strong city; ^b salvation will God appoint for

ⁿ Genesis 49. 18; Titus 2. 13.—^o Psalm 20. 5.
—³ Or, *threshed*.—⁴ Or, *threshed in Mad-*

menah.—^p Chapter 26. 5.—^a Chapter 2. 11.
—^b Chapter 60. 18.

9. **Lo, this is our God**—All the ransomed from all the earth use this language. **We have waited for him**—Revelation has dawned slowly, but it comes in this prediction to its perfect and eternal clearness. The truth comes out that He alone can and will save, and everlasting rejoicing ensues thereat. This foreseen joy is that of the whole redeemed Church.

10. **In this mountain**—Zion, symbol again of God's located presence and power, namely, his Church. **Hand...rest**—The term "hand" is usually employed as an emblem of active power; it is here used as the pledge of the Church's security from hostility without a protection, and that hostility to Zion the Jews more readily and keenly apprehended when it was expressed in connexion with a "household" name of an ever bitter enemy to the Jews. Usually that name was Edom or Moab. Here it is **Moab**. Moab's hostility is to have the fate of the refuse, dirt, and filth of each Palestinian town—removal to the **dunghill**, which to this day is everywhere in the villages a conspicuous object.

11, 12. **He shall spread forth his hands**—The subject "he" is supposed by some to be Moab; by those especially who take מִיָּמָיו, *b'mo*, verse 10, (a poetic preposition,) as the incorrect reading for מֵיָּמָיו, (in water.) I prefer to think the subject here is Jehovah. His hands are put forth as the swimmer puts out his hands both ways, and he sweeps Moab on the right and left and lays him sprawling. So the Chaldee Targum, also the Septuagint

and the Vulgate. The figure is that of the complete prostration of the enemy. Moab, as seen from the hills of Judea, looks like a very high wall abutting on the Dead Sea and capped by a broad plateau beyond. And it is as if Jehovah extended his hands to level this wall to the lowest ground below, thus to accomplish its irrecoverable desolation. So shall all enemies of Zion go the way of the lost Moab. So shall all arrogance taking on the likeness of a fortress, and pride that of a towering wall, be leveled forever.

CHAPTER XXVI.

The apocalyptic vision continues into times when the world-kingsdoms, Assyria and Babylon, are conquered, never more again to invade and destroy, and when the last mystic scoffer, Moab, is trodden down. Redeemed Judah takes occasion still further for a triumphal song. The song is based on the foreseen return of Israel from exile; but the prophet soars above earthly deliverances into Messianic freedom and safety, of which the return to the Holy Land is but the type.

1. **In that day**—Continuous with, or immediately successive to, the period spoken of chap. xxv, 9–12. **This song**—This joyous acclaim. **We have a strong city**—That is, we too, as well as those of the world-kingsdoms now prophetically thrown down. Ours is impregnable, never possible to be destroyed. **Salvation...for walls**—God himself is set in our defence and safety, in place of man-made walls and earthworks.

walls and bulwarks. **2** ^cOpen ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the ¹truth may enter in. **3** Thou wilt keep *him* in ²perfect peace, *whose* ³mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. **4** Trust ye in the Lord for ever: ⁴for in the Lord JEHOVAH is ⁴everlasting strength.

5 For he bringeth down them that dwell on high; ^cthe lofty city, he layeth it low; he layeth it low, *even* to the ground; he bringeth it *even* to the dust. **6** The foot shall tread it down, *even* the feet of the poor, *and* the steps of the needy. **7** The way of the just is uprightness: ^cthou, most upright, dost

^c Psalm 118. 19, 20.—¹ Heb. *truths*.—² Heb. *peace, peace*, chap. 57. 19.—³ Or, *thought*, or, *imagination*.—⁴ Chap. 45. 17.—⁴ Heb. *the rock of ages*, Deut. 32. 4.

2. Open... gates—The choral style of the twenty-fourth psalm appears here, but the responsive chorus does not here, as there, appear. The picture is of Zion's city purified and made ready to receive the reclaimed and purified nation.

3. Keep... in perfect peace—The original has it, *Peace, peace*. Psalm cxli, 7, 8, is the source of the thought here. The new Israel knows that Jehovah preserves him in enduring and intensified peace, because he knows his trust in Jehovah is perfect.

4. And as if from heaven comes the encouragement to Israel to **trust in the Lord for ever**, to permit it on no occasion to fail. **For in the Lord Jehovah**—Original, *Jah Jehovah*. On this combination, see note at chapter xii, 2. Delitzsch regards the two names as the proper name of God the Redeemer in the most emphatic form.

5-7. He bringeth down them that dwell on high—The argument is, Why not trust such a One who has overwhelmed imperial oppressive cities, and abolished nearer gainsaying peoples. A more free rendering here, but giving the true sense is, "The dwellers in high pride he hurled downward, the towering fortress he tumbled to the ground and pulverized it to dust. Feet of common people, feet of the poor and lowly, are treading it in very scorn." But to the righteous how otherwise the result!

weigh the path of the just. **8** Yea, ^cin the way of thy judgments, O Lord, have we waited for thee; the desire of *our* soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee. **9** ^bWith my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early: for when thy judgments *are* in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness. **10** ¹Let favour be showed to the wicked, *yet* will he not learn righteousness: in ²the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and will not behold the majesty of the Lord. **11** Lord, *when* thy hand is lifted up, ¹they will not see: *but* they shall see,

^c Chap. 25. 12; 32. 19.—^f Psalm 37. 23.—^g Chap. 64. 5.—^h Psa. 63. 6; Sol. Song 3. 1.—ⁱ Eccles. 8. 12; Rom. 2. 4.—^k Psa. 143. 10.—^l Job 34. 27; Psa. 28. 5; chap. 5. 12.

Their way is straight and even. The word **weigh**, in verse 7, is used in the sense of to make even, to level. The course of the just is smooth and unimpeded.

8, 9. In the way of thy judgments—In the song allusion is here made to the long discipline of the Judahites in Babylon, perhaps also elsewhere. **Waited**—We waited in patient, trustful hope. **Thy name**—Our desire was to *thee*, for the word "name" means all that belongs to the divine personality. **In the night... early**—From night till morn, was our desire intense toward thee.

10. Let favour be showed—For a moment the song takes on the preceptive character. The idea is, the wicked will not learn that God's goodness is bestowed on them to lead them to repentance and to do righteousness. **The land of uprightness**—That is, in a situation the most favourable, among a people whose example is right. The wicked still do not amend, nor see the goodness and majesty of God.

11. When thy hand is lifted up—The "hand" is the symbol of power, and when raised denotes power in exercise. Though divine power is conspicuous, the wicked recognise it not. **But they shall see**—Non-recognition of it shall not long last. **Ashamed**—They shall be put to confusion. **Envy at**—In observing God's zeal for his own people. **Fire of thine**

and be ashamed for *their* envy ⁶ at the people; yea, the fire of thine enemies shall devour them.

12 Lord, thou wilt ordain peace for us: for thou also hast wrought all our works ⁶ in us. **13** O Lord our God, ⁷ other lords besides thee have had dominion over us; *but* by thee only will we make mention of thy name. **14** *They are* dead, they shall not live; *they are* deceased, they shall not rise: therefore hast thou visited and destroyed them, and made all their memory to perish. **15** Thou hast increased the nation, O Lord, thou hast increased the nation;

5 Or, *toward* thy people.—6 Or, *for* us.—
m 2 Chron. 12. 8.—n Hosea 5. 15.

enemies—That is, “fire of” judgment, which “thine enemies” deserve and shall receive.

12. Peace for us—“Peace,” here, is comprehensive. It is future safety from all the evils suffered under Jehovah’s enemies. **Wrought all our works**—Ground for trusting that God will secure to them future peace, inasmuch as his high hand has wrought complete rescue from the evils of captivity, etc.

13. Other lords—Some suppose idolatry referred to, of which the Jews were forever weaned in Babylon. More likely, rulers in Babylon are prominently intended. **But by thee only**—Better rendered, *but only thee* will we henceforth mention.

14. They are dead—That is, kings and tyrants just referred to. **They shall not rise**—That civil state, that God-defying power, shall have no resurrection. **Therefore**—Equivalent to *so then*. The result is certain, that all celebrity of that base people shall be blotted out. This is expressed in high figure, but its intention merely is an eternal, ethical truth; nothing can succeed against God.

15. Increased the nation—The nation of reclaimed and purified Jews. Their enlargement was by successive colonies from the East for a hundred years after the first return from Babylon. Also, as the next clause asserts, **(thou hadst removed it far unto all the ends of the earth,)** by growth from proselytes made outside of Judea; though the law of parallelism

thou art glorified: thou hadst removed it far *unto* all the ends of the earth.

16 Lord, ⁸ in trouble have they visited thee; they poured out a ⁷ prayer *when* thy chastening *was* upon them. **17** Like as ⁹ a woman with child, *that* draweth near the time of her delivery, is in pain, *and* crieth out in her pangs; so have we been in thy sight, O Lord. **18** We have been with child, we have been in pain, we have as it were brought forth wind; we have not wrought any deliverance in the earth; neither have ⁹ the inhabitants of the world fallen. **19** ¹⁰ Thy dead *men* shall live, *together with* my

7 Heb. *secret speech*.—8 Chap. 13. 8; John 16. 21.—9 Psa. 17. 14.—10 Ezek. 37. 1, etc.

requires “the ends of the earth” to mean the farthest limits of the literal land of Israel. So Lowth and Noyes. But this is too mechanical for poetry. Frequently the prophet contemplates the new Israel as extending to the converted of all nations of the earth.

16–18. Back to Israel’s night of affliction—perhaps before, and certainly during, the captivity—is the glance again taken. See verses 8, 9. **In trouble...they visited thee**—“They,” the then faithful of Israel, sought to find thee. **They poured out a prayer**—Not an audible, but a whispered, prayer: like Hannah’s prayer, from the heart’s depths. So the word here means. Its object was the nation’s salvation from overthrow and captivity. So felt the prophets and holy ones of Judah. But in vain. Calamities would come, because Judah’s sin, now socially and poetically crystallized, required them. The prayer was an agony, like that of women near to birth-giving. The prayer continued long into the night of the captivity. In ineffectual praying they almost gave themselves up as dead.

19. But in strong contrast with the preceding despair, the cheering word comes. **Thy dead men shall live**—Civilly, nationally, dead in Babylon, is the primary meaning. The tone changes from sorrow over the long national subjection to exultant joy in view of a speedy return to a higher national and spiritual life in Zion. **My dead body**—The Lord is speaking. “Subjected Zion being ‘my dead

dead body shall they arise. "Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.

20 Come, my people, "enter thou into

r Dan. 12. 2. — *s* Ex. 12. 23, 23. — *t* Ps. 30. 5; ch.

body," that is, being the dead of Zion, shall arise, shall have a spiritual as well as a civil resurrection. Alexander thinks this phrase to be unauthorized. **For thy dew...herbs**—The Lord's "dew," such as he sends upon herbs to refresh and make them thrive. "Dew" is ever the emblem in Scripture of a divine quickening—an animating figure—as in the East, where rain falls seldom, copious dews largely supply the deficiency. See Hosea xiv, 5. **Earth shall cast out the dead**—"Cast out," a rendering of טָפַח, (*taphil*), is a strong way of

saying, "The earth shall precipitate as by a convulsive act; that is, bring to the surface the dead;" a meaning which the verb necessarily bears here, as most expositors, even the rationalistic, agree. Such language could scarcely be used, except in view of the doctrine of the resurrection, not unfamiliar at this time. The language is clearly figurative, and borrowed from this doctrine. It is applied here to the Church, as good as dead in Babylon, but soon to have resurrection life in Zion. Figures are formed, not from things unknown, but from things or ideas before conceived of and familiar. Because Moses said little of a future life, and urged motives to obedience upon the Israelites from sanctions drawn from this side of eternity, is certainly no proof that he knew nothing of the doctrine of a future life. He dealt with people whose obedience to the law should rest first upon the essential righteousness of the law itself, and upon the reality of a holy, all-powerful Sovereign immediately ruling them. In like manner other doctrines—the resurrection of the dead especially—were held from direct statement and revelation till it should be practically reasonable for such statements and revela-

thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were "for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. **21** For, behold, the Lord "cometh out of his place to punish the inhab-

54, 7, 8; 2 Cor. 4. 17. — *u* Mic. 1. 3; Jude 14.

tion to be made. In favoured minds—in minds inspired and commissioned to teach the world, as were Moses, Isaiah, and the like—no doubt doctrines latest needed in the world's history lay at least in a dim premonitory outline in connexion with the whole scheme of redemption; and this outline came out in marked clearness as fast as the world's mind should comprehend and need it. Numerous are the hints in the Old Testament that Abraham, Jacob, Moses, Job, David, Isaiah, and other prophets, knew of future life with its rewards and punishments, and of the resurrection of the dead, long before Persian Zoroastrianism had existence, from which rationalists allege the resurrector idea originated. The air of familiarity with this idea in our prophet's easy allusion to it in the expression and figures here in question, leaves, so far forth, little opportunity for cavil.

20. The foregoing song now ends, and Isaiah again speaks as a prophet. While judgment passes on the world hostile to Israel, Israel, restored to Zion in vision, is called to silent adoration and prayer. **Come...into thy chambers**—The last great victories are not achieved. Not yet is the time for final triumph. The rage of the enemy is not yet over. Be circumspect, cautious, prayerful, till the trial ceases. **Indignation**—God's wrath against the Babylonians and all enemies of his people. The Jews, though confident of ultimate triumph, are not to be jubilant prematurely, but to wait till the retributive storm be overpast.

21. Out of his place—The Hebrew idea of God's residence, namely, the heavens; an idea simple, childlike, unmetaphysical as to the divine infinitude. **Inhabitants of the earth**—Such were the people of the lands

itants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her ^a blood, and shall no more cover her slain.

CHAPTER XXVII.

IN that day the Lord with his sore and great and strong sword shall punish leviathan the ¹ piercing serpent, ^a even leviathan that crooked serpent; and he shall slay ^b the dragon that *is* in the sea. **2** In that day ^c sing ye unto

⁸ Heb. *bloods*.—¹ Or, *crossing like a bar*.—^a Psa. 74. 13, 14.—^b Chap. 51. 9; Ezekiel 29. 3; 32. 2.—^c Chap. 5. 1.

belonging to the great world-powers, accounted — the people of Chaldea. **Blood**—Guilt is here meant—guilt for the shedding the blood of the righteous. See Gen. iv, 10. **Cover her slain**—The same idea expanded. They shall no more conceal their guilt for shedding righteous blood.

The people of God are ever avenged for wrongs done them. See Exodus xiv, 13, 14. "Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of Jehovah. Jehovah shall fight for you and ye shall hold your peace."

CHAPTER XXVII.

This chapter is connected with the three preceding, and closes the prophecy, or series of prophecies, concerning God's true Israel and the fate of Israel's opposers.

1. In that day—The same time as that referred to in the preceding verse, when the Lord should come "out of his place to punish." This verse should have closed the preceding chapter. **Sore**—An epithet applied to the "sword" with which the Lord efficiently enters the contest, meaning *hard* and *well-tempered*. **Great and strong sword**—Triple epithets completed, denoting no failure of providential turnings in the adjustments of this war. **Leviathan... dragon**—Really the same sea or river monster, thrice named. There is but little doubt that *leviathan* the *piercing*, or *fleeing*, (or, if Arabic etymology is a help to its meaning, as Gesenius thinks, *cross mailed*, referring to the twisted mailed covering of the crocodile,) applies to Assyria on the rapid Tigris, and *leviathan* the *crooked*,

her, ^d A vineyard of red wine. **3** ^e 1 the Lord do keep it; I will water it every moment: lest *any* hurt it, I will keep it night and day. **4** *Fury is not in me*: who would set ^f the briers and thorns against me in battle? I would ^g go through them, I would burn them together. **5** Or let him take hold ^h of my strength, *that* he may ⁱ make peace with me; *and* he shall make peace with me. **6** He shall cause them that come of Ja-

^d Psa. 80. 8; Jer. 2. 21.—^e Psa. 121. 4, 5.—^f 2 Sam. 23. 6; chap. 9. 18.—^g 2 Or, *march against*.—^h Chap. 25. 4.—ⁱ Job 22. 21.

to Babylon, on the winding Euphrates, where the stream is stagnant and marshy. **The dragon**—Referring to the same beast, probably, applies to Egypt on the Nile sea, including thus the three great representative world-powers which had more or less always harassed Israel. The meaning here is difficult, and has been explained variously; this, however, seems the best explanation.

2-5. God's work of overthrow and vindication being accomplished, what more appropriate than the ode which follows? **In that day**—The day or period in which leviathan is destroyed. **Vineyard of red wine**—Lowth turns the sense into *lovely, pleasant*, wine; to the ancients, meaning joy. Jehovah is the keeper of the vineyard, or the Church on Mount Zion, which assures its complete preservation. It is watered and guarded **night and day**. **Fury is not in me**—God speaks and says, I entertain no longer any anger toward my vine. My people have been punished as they needed for discipline. Purified, they need it no more as in days past. **Briers and thorns**—To whom do these refer? The foes of God's people, most likely, in defence of which people God **would go through**, that is, *against*, the said foes; which would be equivalent to burning them. **Or**—Alternative, *else, otherwise*. To be safe from this, let such foes **take hold of my strength**. Let them become reconciled and at peace with God.

6. The song of the vineyard is here explained. The posterity of Jacob, the true Israel which God owns, shall, as this divinely nourished vine, take

cob ¹ to take root: Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit.

7 Hath he smitten him, ² as he smote those that smote him? or is he slain according to the slaughter of them that are slain by him? **8** ³ In measure, ⁴ when it shooteth forth, thou wilt debate with it: ⁵ he stayeth his rough wind in the

² Chap. 37. 31; Hos. 14. 5, 6.—³ Heb. *according to the stroke of those*.—*k* Job 23. 6; Psa. 6. 1; Jer. 10. 24; 30. 11; 46. 28; 1 Cor. 10. 13.

root, grow, extend branches, send down new roots, and spread blossoms and fruit to all parts of the earth. Rom. xi. 12. Israel becometh thus "the riches of the Gentiles."

7. Him—That is, Israel. The question, in form, calls for a negative answer. Not to the degree God has punished his enemies has he punished Israel. He has punished **in measure**, only moderately. **הַבְּמִסָּחָה**, (*b'sassah*.)

composed probably of two words, and to be translated *in measure*, *measure*, which means, *very moderately*. The word is used in no other place in the Bible, and has occasioned a world of difficulty. But interpreters of approved character come together in the explanation above given. **When it shooteth forth**—A translation not intelligible. Literally, it is, *In sending her forth*, that is, God's vineyard, or Jewish people. **Thou wilt debate**—Or, enter into contention with this vineyard. With these clauses, "in measure" is to be construed. Then the meaning of the verse is: "When thou didst send thy people into Babylon, thou didst punish them very moderately, considering, first, their deserts, and second, the fruits of this captivity." **He stayeth**—Showing how he punished only moderately. He checked the severe **rough wind** upon them. He is to return them to Jerusalem, though not in the period of the tempestuous east wind. Such winds are emblematic of divine judgment. See Job xxvii, 21.

9. By this—By this sending away to Babylon. **Purged**—Of idolatrous tendencies forever. **The fruit to take away his sin**—The object or overruling purpose of the captivity. **As**

day of the east wind. **9** By this therefore shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged; and this is all the fruit to take away his sin; when he maketh all the stones of the altar as chalkstones that are beaten in sunder, the groves and ⁶ images shall not stand up. **10** Yet the defenced city *shall* be desolate, and the habitation forsaken, and left like a

⁴ Or, *when thou sendest it forth*.—⁵ Or, *when he removeth it*.—*l* Psa. 78. 38.—⁶ Or, *sun images*.

chalkstones—The old idolatrous altars in Judea are to crumble down as chalk crumbles in long weathering. The limestone of Judea is what, in geology, is called *cretaceous*, and easily crumbles or wears away. Likewise the old idolatrous groves, in which licentious rites were enacted, shall be cut down, and the sun images (Ash-toreth and Baal) destroyed.



MEDAL OF ASHTORETH.



MEDAL OF THE FEMALE BAAL.

10, 11. The defenced city—Which some think means Jerusalem, some Samaria, and some Babylon. Samaria, at least, may be ruled out; but the question hangs in doubt as to the other two. In favour of Babylon is the natural conservation of verse 12.

wilderness: "there shall the calf feed, and there shall he lie down, and consume the branches thereof. **11** When the boughs thereof are withered, they shall be broken off: the women come, and set them on fire; for "it is a people of no understanding: therefore he that made them will not have mercy on them, and °he that formed them will show them no favour.

12 And it shall come to pass in that

m Chap. 17. 2; 32. 14.—*n* Deut. 32. 28; chap. 1. 3; Jer. 8. 7.

In favour of Jerusalem is the easily-supposed figure of a vineyard at the close of this verse, and so still kept up through the next verse. The interpretation is not materially to be changed, whichever is meant. During the captivity all the figures of desolation here apply to Jerusalem, and when Babylon shall be overthrown the same description will apply to it, though the desolation is not so complete here as in chapter xiii, 19–22; (where see notes;) but there total desolation was the work of ages, not of a single short period. If it means Jerusalem, the prophet speaks from the foreseen captivity as a point of time. The city ruins are overgrown with grass and thickets, where stray cattle browse. When the shrubs decay, the women (a custom still in the East) gather them for fuel. The lowest class only were left behind—the class of least character, and of least regard to Jehovah, *apparently* uncared for of their Creator, as indicated by their destitution.

12. But on Israel's repentance all this is to cease, as to Jerusalem. **Shall beat off from the channel—**Of the Euphrates to the river of Egypt (Wady el Arish) the Rhinocollura of the Septuagint, ancient boundary line between Egypt and Palestine. Over the whole extent of the original land of Promise, Jehovah shall order the growth and beating, or threshing, of grain for the sustenance of the returned ones of Israel. This is one view of the imagery employed here. Another is, that the beating implies an extensive growth of olives or other fruit to be carefully beaten off and discriminated as to the good and the

day, *that* the LORD shall beat off from the channel of the river unto the stream of Egypt, and ye shall be gathered one by one, O ye children of Israel. **13** ^p And it shall come to pass in that day, ^q *that* the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the LORD in the holy mount at Jerusalem.

o Deut. 32. 18; chap. 43. 1, 7; 44. 2, 21, 24.—*p* Chap. 2. 11.—*q* Matt. 24. 31; Rev. 11. 15.

bad; the good then to be gathered together; the whole signifying that the true Israel shall be discriminately gathered. **One by one**—Rather, one to another, or, one after another, in colonies, to their home in Judea, from the different directions where their exile has been. Perhaps this meaning better suits the idea of the text.

13. The great trumpet—An image taken from the trumpet blown to summon the people to holy convocation. Lev. xxiii, 24. Jehovah is, as it were, to summon his righteous ones to worship him on Mount Zion. **Ready to perish**—That is, those who, in the region of the Euphrates, had not enjoyed religious opportunities, and those who, amid national trouble in Judah, had fled in consternation to Egypt. All these shall hear the call to return, and, purified from old vices, with intense zeal to serve Jehovah shall they come.

Thus closes these four chapters respecting the destiny of the true Israel, not alone of Judah, but the sincere and true of all tribes of Israel, who, one after another, were to be gathered as individuals or in colonies to Mount Zion.

PART V.

Historico-prophetic discourses relating to Assyria and the Egyptian alliance, chapters xxviii–xxxiii.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

DENUNCIATION AGAINST ISRAEL.

Here commences a series of prophecies ending with chapter xxxiii, and appropriately called, by Delitzsch, a *book of woes upon revolting Israel.*

CHAPTER XXVIII.

WOE to ^athe crown of pride, to the drunkards of Ephraim, whose ^bglorious beauty is a fading flower, which are on the head of the fat valleys of them that are ^covercome with wine! **2** Behold, the Lord hath a mighty and strong one, ^ewhich as a tempest of hail and a destroying storm, as a flood of mighty waters overflowing, shall cast down to the earth with the hand. **3** ^dThe crown of pride, the drunkards of Ephraim, shall be trodden ²under foot: **4** And

^a Ver. 3.—^b Ver. 4.—¹ Heb. *broken*.—^c Ch. 30. 30; Ezek. 13. 11.—^d Ver. 1.—² Heb.

THE FIRST WOE.

This chapter was probably written in Hezekiah's reign, and its utterance is against Samaria, the capital of the northern kingdom, before its downfall and depopulation under Shalmanezzer, king of Assyria.

1. Woe—A calamity pronounced as impending. **Crown of pride**—A poetic figure describing the site of Samaria, a beautiful, oblong hill, fertile to its summit, rising from the centre of a fertile plain or valley, behind which is a circular range of mountains. The whole is verdant with grass, grain, olive groves, and vineyards. Upon this place and people serious events are about to fall, for reasons in part contained in epithets characterizing them, namely, their pride and intemperance. **Drunkards of Ephraim**—So the people of Israel are called from the name of its strongest tribe. **On the head**—On Samaria's heights, overlooking valleys below rich and fertile, but producing chiefly that which only made the people worse. Drunkenness, however, is mentioned, not as the only prevalent vice, but as the crying one.

2. A mighty and strong one—An invading army, no doubt, is meant. Ravages which this should make on the country would surely have a fiercer description than that furnished in the picture given below. **Tempest of hail**—At times furious in that land, and occasionally lasting two or three days. (This remark is from personal observation of the writer at Shechem, seven miles distant from Samaria, in the month of March, 1870.) **Cast...**

^ethe glorious beauty, which is on the head of the fat valley, shall be a fading flower, and as the hasty fruit before the summer; which *when* he that looketh upon it seeth, while it is yet in his hand he ³eateth it up.

5 In that day ^fshall the Lord of hosts be for a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty, unto the residue of his people. **6** And for a spirit of judgment to him that sitteth in judgment, and for strength to them that turn the battle to the gate.

with feet.—^e Verse 1.—³ Heb. *swalloweth*.—^f Chap. 41. 16; Jer. 9. 23, 24; Zech. 6. 13, 15.

with the hand—The "hand" is the emblem of force, power, violence.

3, 4. Trodden under feet—Thrust violently down so as to be trodden under the feet of the invader, (the Assyrian army under Shalmanezzer in this case,) in the sixth year of the reign of Hezekiah, king of Judah. **As the hasty fruit**—Denoting the early fig. The first crop of figs in Palestine comes in June, is comparatively scanty, and is used up as soon almost as it is ripe enough to eat: plucked as a dainty to be at once eaten. From August to November the later and larger fig crops come, and are stored for subsequent use.

The woe uttered will consist of the utter destruction of the city, the deportation of the people to Assyria, and the extinction thus of garlanded revels at Samaria. This actually took place, B. C. 721.

5, 6. The subject partially changes here. **In that day**—Referring to the time when events above predicted should occur. **Crown of glory, and ... diadem of beauty**—The events at Samaria are to present two lessons: **1.** The Lord Jehovah is himself concerned in permitting Assyria to conquer Israel. He sees it best to do so, for Israel's and the world's good. **2.** He shows that the fear of Jehovah, not the natural loveliness of Samaria with her gross vices, is the true "crown of glory" of a nation. And the remnant left in Israel and all of Judah shall learn these lessons. He also shows that himself only can inspire truth and justice in one sitting in the magistrate's seat, and him-

7 But they also ^ahave erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way; ^bthe priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine, they are out of the way through strong drink; they err in vision, they stumble in judgment. 8 For all tables are full of vomit and filthiness, so that there is no place clean.

9 ^cWhom shall he teach knowledge?

^a Prov. 20. 1; Hos. 4. 11.—^b Chap. 56. 10, 12.
^c Jer. 6. 10.—^d Heb. *the hearing?*

self only can impart true courage, and render a people when invaded or assailed able to repel attacks and drive the enemy back to his own city gates.

7, 8. **But they also**—With these words the prophet passes from Ephraim to Judah. He had just said that Judah should be spared while Ephraim should be sacked and destroyed. But even Judah is guilty of drunkenness. Those of them who are of the anti-reform party, false prophet and priest, even these err or stagger in vision, that is, while prophesying; and stumble, that is, blunder grievously, in giving judgment, or adjudicating cases, and all through strong drink. **Priest and the prophet**—Both these classes were to be found in the worldly, anti-spiritual party, which also absorbed the higher classes of society in Jerusalem. The true prophet was in the minority, hence unpopular and persecuted, though even a king, as did Hezekiah, might favour his cause. **Tables are...vomit**—The terms here are used of the extreme effects of drunkenness. Hyperbole is common among orientals, and is allowable for reaching the depths of the thought in hand, and to present a mirror before real baseness.

9, 10. These verses appear to imply an interruption on the part of those against whom the prophet is inveighing. They seem to reply scornfully. **Whom shall he teach knowledge**—"He, the intolerable moralist: does he mean us, already advanced in understanding? We need it not. We are through with our tuition in the schools. We want no more of precept upon precept...line

and whom shall he make to understand ^adoctrine? *them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts.*

10 For precept ^bmust be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little: 11 For with ^cstammering lips and another tongue ^dwill he speak to this people. 12 To whom he said, This is the rest wherewith ye may cause

^a Or, bath been.—^b Heb. *stammerings of lips*.—^c 1 Cor. 14. 21.—^d Or, *he hath spoken*.

upon line...here a little and there a little. We want no more of his elementary teachings, his petty teasings; no more of the many repetitions of his excited, high toned addresses." Perhaps they attempted to mimic him, but were only able to speak (hic) (being then well drunken) in stammering (hic) words. Among the several explanations of these verses, this, which was first hinted by Jerome, and later accepted by Lowth, Ewald, and Delitzsch, seems the best.

11, 12. **For**—One explanation of this is, that the wicked prophets were about to continue, and got as far as "for," when Isaiah snatched the word from them and proceeded thence himself: "Yes, for," etc. Another translation is, "Yea, or truly," the prophet's own commencing words. **Stammering lips**—"Yes, with a stammering tongue," that is, with another dialect, "will God speak to this people." That dialect shall be the semi-Semitic *patois* of the fierce people beyond the Euphrates. It is said that the Assyrian Semitic was to Jewish ears much the same as the provincial lower Saxon (Platt-Deutsch) is to the pure high German language—said patois being mixed perhaps with Iranian, possibly with Tartar elements. See 2 Kings xviii, 26-28; Isa. xxxvi, 11. It is proper to suppose, from the exigences of the text, that exile to Assyria is here threatened in consequence of such scoffing, which was alarmingly becoming the rule, not the exception, in the conduct of the Jews. **To whom**—The scoffing Jews. God had repeatedly said, **This is the rest**, namely, trusting in Jehovah of Hosts, and not in Syrian (chap. vii) nor in

the weary to rest; and this *is* the refreshing: yet they would not hear. **13** But the word of the Lord was unto them ¹precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, *and* there a little; that they might go, and fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken.

14 Wherefore hear the word of the Lord, ye scornful men, that rule this people which *is* in Jerusalem. **15** Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are

I Ver. 10; Jer. 23. 36, 38; Hosea 6. 5; 8. 12.—
m Amos 2. 4.—n Gen. 49. 24; Psa. 118. 22; Matt.

Egyptian (chapter xxxvii) alliances. **Yet they would not hear**—God's fruitless patience and teachings will not always be continued.

13. Word...unto them precept—God's method of training this people is described, namely, by the most patient, ploddingly-repeated, lessons. **That**—Two things are meant by this word. 1. The consequences to the people for their disloyalty to Jehovah, namely, ruin to them as a nation. 2. Intention to maintain the majesty of the divine law of righteousness. Scoffing men are long and patiently endured, to the end that, if they will not hear, their guilt shall be punished, their example shall be a warning, and the divine honour shall be maintained.

14-16. Scornful men—The debased, drunken priests and false prophets in Jerusalem, (verses 7, 8,) scorning the message of the true prophets. (Verses 9, 10.) **Because ye have said**—Have said by your actions. If their actions were translated into words, their actual language would be as stated in this fifteenth verse. **Covenant with death**—A metaphorical representation of their having made terms with the king of terrors not to be too soon called to die. **With hell**—The underworld—place of departed spirits—a poetic equivalent with death. With this the same terms are supposed to have been made, not to be too soon called to the spirit world. **Overflowing scourge**—A mixed metaphor, probably referring to the Assyrian army invading and passing through Judea on its way to Egypt.

we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us: ^mfor we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves:

16 Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation ^a a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner *stone*, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.

17 Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail shall sweep away ^o the refuge of

21. 42; Acts 4. 11; Rom. 9. 33; 10. 11; Eph. 2. 20; 1 Peter 2. 6-8.—o Verse 15.

Lies—The prophet's definition. They acted as if a sufficient refuge was to be found in falsehood and deceit—in the false notions and doctrines on which their whole conduct was transacted.

16. Therefore—To the evil ones a terrible threatening follows, to the good a glorious promise. As, on a former occasion—Ahaz refusing to ask a sign—Jehovah selected his own for him, so now Jehovah opposes to the false confidence of these evil ones, **a foundation stone** laid in Zion—a firm foundation which nothing can move; (1 Peter ii, 6;) a king mighty and morally terrible; no doubt the Messiah. **A precious corner stone**—Tried and unfailling, and sustaining the whole grand spiritual edifice. Who rests on this is sure never to fail. **Shall not make haste**—The sacred stone played an important part in the very early Semitic religions. Its influence lingered among the Jews, and lingers still among the Mohammedans. Modern travellers, too, are struck with the eminent figure here used, by the immense stones still remaining at the foundation of ancient walls. (See, especially, ROBINSON'S *Researches*, vol. i, pp. 343, 351, 422.) Some New Testament quotations from the Septuagint render "shall not be ashamed," *shall not lack confidence*, which comes to the same thing. Gesenius thinks both these ideas are in the Arabic cognate word, hence doubtless in the Hebrew word itself, and this accounts for the Septuagint translation.

17. Judgment...line...righteousness...plummet—This means that the rule of God's dealings is one of

lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place.

18 And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be ⁸ trodden down by it. **19** From the time that it goeth forth it shall take you: for morning by morning shall it pass over, by day and by night: and it shall be a vexation only ⁹ to understand the report. **20** For the bed is shorter than that a man can

⁸ Heb. a treading down to it. — ⁹ Or, when he shall make you to understand doctrine. — ^p 2 Sam. 5. 20; 1 Chron. 14. 11.

the strictest justice. "He makes justice the rule of his proceedings, just as the builder regulates his work by line and plummet." The figure of the builder is continued from the previous verse. **Hail**—A mighty destructive agent; a figure importing visitations of divine justice upon systems of falsehood built up by wicked priests and compromising prophets. See notes on verse 2.

18. Covenant—Covenants secured by outside sorcery, black art, and oracle, shall be obliterated. So the literal word, in allusion to erasures of waxen tablets. **Death and hell** (original, *sheol*) are ghastly impersonations; very proper parties of the second part for such covenants and arguments. **Scourge**—See on verse 15; a mixed metaphor;—an invading army using blows heavily laid on, and trampling under feet as it advances.

19. From the time—Or, as often as it sweeps along, it shall bear you, false Jews, away. **Morning by morning**—Literally, *morning, morning*; a Hebraism for every morning, continually. **Vexation**—Alarm, consternation. **Report**—The thing heard or the meaning of what is said and heard. A thing of awful import. Some terrible calamity announced. The marginal note has "doctrine"—denoting some smiting truth.

20. Bed is shorter—A proverb whose core of meaning is, *insufficiency, no rest*; hence, it implies no security in their plans of defence.

21. As in Mount Perazim—See 2 Sam. v, 20, 21, where, with trust in

stretch himself *on it*: and the covering narrower than that he can wrap himself *in it*. **21** For the Lord shall rise up as *in* mount ^p Perazim, he shall be wroth as *in* the valley of ^a Gibeon, that he may do his work, ^r his strange work: and bring to pass his act, his strange act. **22** Now therefore be ye not mockers, lest your bands be made strong: for I have heard from the Lord God of hosts ^s a consumption, even determined upon the whole earth. **23** Give ye ear, and hear my voice; hearken, and hear my

^q Joshua 10. 10, 12; 2 Samuel 5. 25; 1 Chronicles 14. 16. — ^r Lam. 3. 33. — ^s Chap. 10. 23, 23; Dan. 9. 27.

Jehovah, David burst through and defeated the Philistines. 1 Chron. xiv, 11. So shall be the rising up and bursting through of Jehovah in his wrath. No light, no fringe of promise, lines this dreaded woe. Is there not something more than Syrian invasion here? What means the **strange work** which God will do other than this? As he had often punished Israel's enemies with a furious "bursting through," so now he will in same way punish Israel itself.

22. Yet he so loves his own people, and yearns over them, that this fearful "work" may be at least partially averted. Otherwise the prophet could not remonstrate in terms as follows: **Now therefore be ye not mockers**—Repentance is still open. Change of base in your lives, policies, and teaching is yet possible. Pursue not your mockeries further, lest your fetters (**bands**) be strengthened. At present we are only tributary to Assyria. If we succeed, which we shall not, in gaining effective alliance with Egypt, **a consumption**, a judgment of destruction, is **determined upon the whole earth**. Upon the whole of the Lord's land, as well as upon Egypt also.

23. Give ye ear...hear my speech—It might seem, and properly, that the prophet's address has closed, and he enters here on a new view, a relieving side to the woe. He calls attention to a parable taken from the common work of the husbandman, to illustrate that it is not always God's way merely to punish. He does this

speech. **24** Doth the ploughman plough all day to sow? doth he open and break the clods of his ground? **25** When he hath made plain the face thereof, doth he not cast abroad the fitches, and scatter the cummin, and cast in ¹⁰ the principal wheat and the appointed barley and the ¹¹ rye in their ¹² place? **26** ¹³ For his God doth instruct him to discretion, and doth teach him. **27** For the fitches are not threshed with a threshing instrument, neither is a cart wheel turned about upon the cummin; but the fitches

¹⁰ Or, *the wheat in the principal place, and barley in the appointed place.*—¹¹ Or, *spelt.*—¹² Heb, *border.*—¹³ Or, *And he bindeth it in such sort as his God doth teach him.*

only to the wholly incorrigible; these he destroys. Those less so, he corrects simply to benefit.

24-26. Doth the ploughman plough all day—That is, does he plough interminably, never cease? **To sow**—In order to sow, in order to make the ground ready for sowing. The parallel number is of the same meaning. Common sense deigns not an answer. **Made plain**—Level. **The face thereof**—The surface of the fields. **Fitches...cummin**—Garden seeds, the one *Nigella sativa*, used both as a condiment and as medicine, sprinkled upon loaves; the other, of warm, bitterish, aromatic flavour—a plant umbelliferous like fennel, used with salt as a sause. The Maltese are said to grow cummin and thresh it at this day in the same manner as described by Isaiah.—*Bible Dictionary.* **Principal wheat...appointed barley**—The Hebrew is obscure in meaning, and critics conjecture it has been corrupted. "Wheat" and "barley" were always, as now, prime staples. The "wheat" is supposed to have been sown in the inner parts of the field, and surrounded by spelt, or **rye** as a border, and the barley was sown in a field by itself, appropriate to it, or "appointed" for it. This may explain the text as to these terms. The "ploughman" is cited as acting in a sound, common sense way, as God has made him to act in these practical matters. So God acts in perfect accord with the highest wisdom and justice in his treatment of men. He saves all who

are beaten out with a staff, and the cummin with a rod. **28** Bread *corn* is bruised; because he will not ever be threshing it, nor break *it with* the wheel of his cart, nor bruise *it with* his horsemen. **29** This also cometh forth from the Lord of hosts, *which* is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working.

CHAPTER XXIX.

WOE¹ ^ato Ariel, to Ariel, ²the city ^bwhere David dwelt! add ye year to year; let them ³kill sacrifices.

^t Psa. 92. 5; Jer. 32. 19.—¹ Or, *O Ariel*, that is, *the lion of God.*—^a Ezek. 43. 15, 16.—² Or, *of the city.*—^b 2 Sam. 5. 9.—³ Heb, *cut off the heads.*

will permit him to save them: he punishes forever those who hate him and will never yield to him. This is the lesson taught by the parable of the ploughman.

27, 28. So in the harvest. The harvester treats the different crops raised in the same common-sense way. He carefully beats with a *stick*, or rod, the smaller, finer seeds; over these he does not foolishly send the threshing wain. Nor over the larger grains does he drive the cart, or the oxen, or the rolling rough thresher, *interminably*. He uses these till their proper work is done, and then ceases. Now, Israel is God's field and God's threshing floor. But all are not alike roughly threshed. God discriminates the kind of seed to be planted and harvested. He adapts his method of separation to each. So right methods are employed in the distribution of discipline and punishment. If this treatment fails of its purpose, the responsibility is placed where it belongs. He strikes some with a rod; others, who need it, he threshes roughly with the wain; but, unless deserved, he does neither interminably.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE SECOND WOE.

As the preceding chapter began with "the garlanded summit of Samaria," so this opens with Ariel.

1. Woe to Ariel, to Ariel—Referring to Jerusalem, of course, but may mean, "Lion of God," (1 Chron.

2 Yet I will distress Ariel, and there shall be heaviness and sorrow: and it shall be unto me as Ariel. **3** And I will camp against thee round about, and will lay siege against thee with a mount, and I will raise forts against thee. **4** And thou shalt be brought down, and shalt speak out of the ground, and thy speech shall be low out of the dust, and thy voice shall be, as of one that hath a familiar spirit, ° out of the ground, and thy speech shall * whisper out of the dust. **5** Moreover the multitude of thy ° strangers shall be like small dust, and the multitude of the terrible ones *shall be* ° as chaff that passeth away: yea, it shall be ° at an instant suddenly. ■ °Thou

c Chap. 8. 19.—d Heb. *peep*, or, *chirp*.—
d Chap. 25. 5.—e Job 21. 18; chap. 17. 13.

xi, 22,) or God's champion, (2 Sam. xxiii, 20;) or, it may mean, "Altar-fire-hearth," (Ezek. xliii, 15, 16,) a tropical name, as Bochart supposes, (*Hierozoi-con*), because the altar devours sacrifices as the lion devours its prey. Gesenius finds the meaning of "fire-hearth" in the Arabic cognate word for lion. Delitzsch decides for this meaning, and the Chaldee paraphrase renders the repeated word, "O altar! altar!" Jerusalem is the place where altar fires are ceaselessly burning, and a woe is pronounced upon her, at least for a period. **Add ye year to year**—One year to another; that is, go on heartlessly in your yearly sacrifices if ye will. Such dead formality is cause sufficient for a fearful visitation.

2, 3. Years may roll on, and sacrificial routine may be continued, but not long hence this shall be interrupted. **I will distress Ariel**—Jerusalem shall be severely besieged. **Heaviness and sorrow**—Appalling affliction shall befall her. The expression is as if the prophet had vision of all the siege troubles of Jewish history concentrated in one view, from Sennacherib to Titus, so far as the intensity of the distress is considered. The sieges, however, of which we have here a prophetic forecast, included, probably, only those experienced prior to the fall of Judea and the captivity. **I will camp**—Will bring to pass that an army shall, etc.

shall be visited of the LORD of hosts with thunder, and with earthquake, and great noise, with storm and tempest, and the flame of devouring fire. **7^h** And the multitude of all the nations that fight against Ariel, even all that fight against her and her munition, and that distress her, shall be ° as a dream of a night vision. **8^a** It shall even be as when a hungry *man* dreameth, and, behold, he eateth; but he awaketh, and his soul is empty: or as when a thirsty *man* dreameth, and, behold, he drinketh; but he awaketh, and, behold, *he is* faint, and his soul hath appetite: so shall the multitude of all the nations be, that fight against mount Zion.

f Chap. 30. 13.—g Chap. 28. 2; 30. 30.—
h Chap. 37. 36.—i Job 20. 8.—k Psa. 73. 20.

With a mount—An elevation on which to erect battering rams, and on which to place marksmen to shoot their arrows into the city. **Raise forts**—Walls, citadels, towers.

4. Shalt be brought down—Jerusalem, accustomed to feel secure from its strength, is personified as lying flat to the ground, like a man prostrate. **Thy speech shall be low**—Its utmost humility is meant, reduced by starvation till so weak as to speak only in low whispers, or with low undertone, like ventriloquists who feign to speak with the dead. The whole city is in this condition, unable to speak above a breath.

5-8. Now there is promise. At the close of verse 2 it is stated that Jerusalem shall become God's altar-fire-hearth—indeed, the burning place of wrath upon her enemies. These verses expand this meaning. **Thy strangers**—Foreign invaders. **Small dust**—Suddenly the fierce besiegers shall become as dust, or like chaff blown away. **Thou**—The enemy. **Shalt be visited**—Physical agencies shall be employed for a sudden annihilating stroke. The distresses of "Ariel" will pass away as in a moment. The suddenness will make the events seem as a dream to both the besiegers and the besieged. The besieger believed the prize of Jerusalem's wealth was his; as he was passing his hand to grasp it, it evaded his touch as a flash. The besieged awoke in like manner to find

9 Stay yourselves, and wonder; ^s cry ye out, and cry: ^t they are drunken, ^m but not with wine; they stagger, but not with strong drink. **10** For ^u the LORD hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath ^o closed your eyes: the prophets and your ^r rulers, ^p the seers hath he covered. **11** And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a ^v book ^q that is sealed, which *men* deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: ^r and he saith, I cannot; for it *is* sealed: **12** And the book is delivered to him that is not

learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I am not learned.

13 Wherefore the Lord said, ^s Forasmuch as this people draw near *me* with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by ^t the precept of men: **14** ^u Therefore, behold, ^s I will proceed to do a marvellous work among this people, *even* a marvellous work and a wonder: ^v for the wisdom of their wise *men* shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent *men* shall be hid. **15** ^w Woe

⁵ Or, *take your pleasure and riot.*—^l See chap. 28. 7, 8.—^m Chap. 31. 21.—ⁿ Romans 11. 8.—^o Psa. 69. 23; chap. 6. 10.—⁶ Hebrew, *sees*. See chap. 3. 2; Jer. 26. 8.—^p 1 Samuel 9. 9.—⁷ Or, *letter*.—^q Chap. 8. 16.

^r Daniel 12. 4. 9; Revelation 5. 1-5, 9; 6. 1.—^s Ezekiel 33. 31; Matthew 15. 8, 9; Mark 7. 6, 7.—^t Colossians 2. 12.—^u Habakkuk 1. 5.—⁸ Hebrew, *I will add*.—^v Jeremiah 49. 7; Obadiah 8; 1 Corinthians 1. 19.—^w Chap. 30. 1.

the distress of dreaded capture wholly gone, and himself a free man again. There is scarcely so vivid a picture, in so small a compass, in all literature. It is the experience of *nightmare* that is given.

Thus far extends the promise attached to the woe-text of verses 1-4. As will soon be seen, however, the people of the city of God's altar-hearth are still stupid and dull.

9-12. Stay...wonder; cry—The original, and our version from it, in this verse are obscure. Credibly the meaning is: "Stare with amazed look at the prophecy just given, if you will. [Isaiah is addressing the nobles and priests and prophets of Jerusalem.] Revel in sensual pleasures if you will. Deeper blindness will be the certain result. Cling still to your policy of rejecting Jehovah's aid and seeking Egypt's." **They stagger**, etc.—Here the prophet apparently soliloquizes: "Here they stagger and are stupefied by something quite different from the usual wine." Chapter xxviii, 7. What this something is he now states to them. **Jehovah hath poured... deep sleep**, etc.—God creates not moral evil; but when projected from the creature, he causes it to react upon and punish itself. Sin stupefies the moral nature. It works "a deep sleep." It makes dull, or even blind, the intellectual and the spiritual eye. Since, therefore, ye will blind yourselves to divine prophecy, Jehovah allows you all the results of your wilful blind-

ness. **The prophets**—They are not God's prophets. Pretending to be prophets they are not true men. They pander to popular vices for popular favour and applause. **Your rulers**—Your head men, men who have wickedly attained to leadership, claiming to be seers, that is, statesmen. **Hath he covered**—Covered as to the eyes. They see not the plain truths of God. (It is the same over again in all ages, down to Christ's time, down to these times.) God leaves them in their blindness. "Like priest, like people." **The vision of all is become... as... a book that is sealed**—Parabolic words, these, which teach that what God reveals avails the people nothing. Prophecy by God's true men is thrown away through the corrupting influence of such leaders.

13, 14 Thus spiritual teaching is rejected, though formal adherence may be observed. In this way moral blindness is self inflicted. It follows the law which God has established, that, abusing so delicate a thing as conscience, it *must* be blinded. They keep up the form of sacrifice and worship in Jerusalem, not from heart-assent to it, but because Hezekiah, the truly pious king at this time, has prohibited idol worship absolutely. They see no help against Assyrian invasion but from Egypt. So spiritual a thing as help from Jehovah alone they cannot appreciate. **A marvellous work and a wonder**—Our Lord quotes these words as applying

unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the Lorn, and their works are in the dark, and ^athey say, Who seeth us? and who knoweth us? **16** Surely your turning of things upside down shall be esteemed as the potter's clay: for shall the ^y work say of him that made it, He made me not? or shall the thing framed say of him that framed it, He had no understanding?

17 *Is it not yet a very little while,* and ^aLebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field, and the fruitful field shall be esteemed as a forest? **18** And ^ain

^a Psa. 94. 7.—^y Chap. 45. 9; Rom. 9. 20.—^z Chap. 32. 15.—^a Chap. 35. 5.—^b Chap. 61. 1.—^c Heb. *shall add*.

to the scribes and Pharisees. Matt. xv, 7-9. Does Isaiah forecast the times of Christ? Yes, by stating a law of the Spirit and conscience applicable on the same point at all times. Perverting truth is followed by blindness always.

15. Seek deep to hide—Irony on the conceit of these leaders, in impiously supposing even God did not see their intent as to Egypt, and the motive of their disloyalty to him. Their absurdity is exposed in the next verse.

16. Your turning...things upside down—Or, "O such perversion!" Fools! to suppose God knows no more than to put your profane, formal pretension of piety on a par with genuine religion; to suppose him easily deluded by *you*. This *means* the proverb-like comparison or illustration in frequent use among the Jews. See chap. xlv, 9; lxiv, 8; Jer. xviii, 5, 7; Romans ix, 20.

17. Is it not a very little while—Equivalent to a declaration that the schemes and plans of Israel should soon come to naught. **Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field**—Rocky and comparatively barren as was this noted mountain, even it should, metaphorically, soon become as a fruitful field, and in place of its thinly scattered cedars should be a crowded forest. To drop the metaphor, the time was not distant when Israel, now as barren of the products of righteousness as rocky Lebanon was of fruit, should become luxuriant in goodness.

that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness.

19 ^b The meek also ^a shall increase *their* joy in the Lorn, and ^c the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel. **20** For the terrible one is brought to nought, and ^d the scorner is consumed, and all that ^e watch for iniquity are cut off: **21** That make a man an offender for a word, and ^f lay a snare for him that reproveth in the gate, and turn aside the just ^g for a thing of nought. **22** Therefore thus saith the Lorn, ^h who redeemed

^c James 2. 5.—^d Chap. 28. 14, 22.—^e Micah 2. 1.—^f Amos 5. 10, 12.—^g Proverbs 28. 21.—^h Josh. 24. 3.

18, 19. That day—The period of moral changes to be wrought by Jehovah, mentioned in the preceding verse. The revolution is to be complete. Hinderances to teaching the law, through blind leaders, shall be removed. The moral blindness of verses 11, 12, is here put in antithesis to the docility and consequent joy in God and his Gospel among the Gentile converts, and the people, now blind and deaf so far as the word of Jehovah is concerned, shall be changed into a people with open ears and seeing eyes. Words such as those the prophet in vain now holds forth, shall then be heard with willing distinctness, and their truth be clearly discerned. **The poor...rejoice in the Holy One of Israel**—Poor men, the pious poor who fear God, and had been subjected to oppression.

20, 21. For the terrible one—The haughty and overbearing among the worldly Jewish leaders. **Watch for iniquity**—For opportunities to commit it. **That make a man an offender for a word**—Hold a man criminal, perhaps, for a reproving word; the prophet, for example, who was faithful to announce the truth from God, or any pious, uninfluential man, whose modest remonstrance they would not endure, and whom they would have condemned in a mock trial at the **gate**, the place for holding court. **Turn aside the just**—The man who had a just cause, by a decision that was a mere mockery of justice.

22-24. Jehovah, who called Abra-

Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob, Jacob shall not now be ashamed, neither shall his face now wax pale. **23** But when he seeth his children, ⁱ the work of mine hands, in the midst of him, they shall sanctify my name, and sanctify the Holy One of Jacob, and shall fear the God of Israel. **24** They also ^k that erred in spirit ¹⁰ shall come to understanding, and they that murmured shall learn doctrine.

CHAPTER XXX.

WOE to the rebellious children, saith the LORD, ^a that take counsel, but not of me; and that cover with

ⁱ Chap. 19. 25; 45. 11; 60. 21; Eph. 2. 10.—^k Chapter 28. 7.—¹⁰ Heb. *shall know understanding*.—^a Chap. 29. 15.—^b Deut. 29. 19.—^c Chap. 31. 1.

ham out of heathendom, says, that in consequence of this happy change, which shall take place in the nation when the oppressor shall be removed, and the poor and meek shall rejoice, and the ignorant shall be properly instructed, the holy ancestry of Israel shall no more blush in shame nor **wax pale** as aforetime on account of the base life of their descendants. But they shall look out of heaven upon the whole body of purified Israel sanctifying the name of Jehovah, who hath wrought in them this great change. They shall see those of formerly erring spirit now learning true wisdom, and the hardened ones accepting sound instruction.

From the foregoing we may fairly infer that the prophet sees just before him in the future, during the improved times of Hezekiah, the beginning of this happy change; and that, with prophetic ken, he leaps on to the better days beyond the captivity, and thence to the glorious period of the Messiah. At least, in other prophetic pieces, such appears to be the law under which the soul of Isaiah was wrought upon.

CHAPTER XXX.

THIRD WOE.

A few months later, when plans of stricter alliance with Egypt, conceived by the rulers at Jerusalem with the greatest secrecy, (see chap.

a covering, but not of my Spirit, ^b that they may add sin to sin: **2** ^c That walk to go down into Egypt, and ^d have not asked at my mouth; to strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharaoh, and to trust in the shadow of Egypt! **3** ^e Therefore shall the strength of Pharaoh be your shame, and the trust in the shadow of Egypt *your* confusion. **4** For his princes were at ^f Zoan, and his ambassadors came to Hanes. **5** ^g They were all ashamed of a people *that* could not profit them, nor be a help nor profit, but a shame, and also a reproach: **6** ^h The burden of the beasts of the south: Into the land of trouble and anguish, from

^d Numbers 27. 21; Joshua 9. 14; 1 Kings 23. 7; Jer. 21. 2; 42. 2, 20.—^e Chapter 20. 5; Jer. 37. 5, 7.—^f Chap. 19. 11.—^g Jer. 2. 36.—^h Chap. 57. 9; Hosea 8. 9; 12. 1.

xxix, 15,) were matured, this prophecy was uttered.

1. Woe to the rebellious children—The woe to these rulers, so disobedient as darkly to **cover**—that is, to keep secret—intricate plans, and to mature them without consulting Jehovah, is equivalent to saying that such plans are an exasperating folly and failure. No help can come from sending ambassadors to Egypt, from taking refuge in her resources against Assyria. Every successive thought thereof is adding sin to sin.

2-4. That walk to go down into Egypt—“Going in the descent of Egypt,” by their ambassadors. Trusting in the shadow of Egypt—in her protection rather than in the protection of Jehovah—is most disgraceful. Their trust in Pharaoh’s protection shall, however, prove to be to them a shame, a confusion. The folly has already gone so far that ambassadors are already at **Zoan**, (the present *Tsan*,) the royal seat in lower northeastern Egypt, and at **Hanes**, (a name perhaps contracted from Tahpanhes, so Grotius thinks,) another royal seat in middle Egypt, to both of which it may be assumed applications were made.

5. They were all ashamed—That is, the ambassadors, probably because their application for alliance and aid was not entertained.

6, 7. Burden of the beasts of the south—Animals carrying southward

whence *come* the young and old lion, 'the viper and fiery flying serpent, they will carry their riches upon the shoulders of young asses, and their treasures upon the bunches of camels, to a people *that shall not profit them*. 7 * For the Egyptians shall help in vain, and to no purpose: therefore have I cried 'concerning this, 'Their strength *is* to sit still.

8 Now go, ^m write it before them in a table, and note it in a book, that it may be for ² the time to come for ever and ever: 9 That ^a this *is* a rebellious people, lying children, children *that* will not hear the law of the LORD: 10 ° Which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right

ⁱ Deut. 8. 15.—^k Jer. 37. 7.—^l Or, *to her*.
^{—l} Verse 15; chap. 7. 4.—^m Hab. 2. 2.
² Heb. *the latter day*.—ⁿ Deut. 32. 20; chap. 1. 4; verse 1.—^o Jer. 11. 21; Amos 2. 12; 7. 13;

to Egypt treasures to buy an alliance. **Land of trouble and anguish**—Egypt, so called either because it was such once to the children of Israel, or because it was such to its present subjects, or because of present confusion to the Jews from rejecting their application. In every conceivable sense Egypt was a "trouble." **The south**—By this term is here meant the interjacent land on the way to Egypt. What a bootless errand, to carry presents over this stretch of desert land to Egypt! Has Israel forgotten her desert horrors? Is she again desirous to go among lions, adders, and leaping serpents, to seek for help and protection? Egypt will not help. Egypt is רַהַב, (*rahab*), a "brag-

gart, sitting still," (Gesenius,) boasting in promises, but doing nothing. Beginning with warnings at folly so great, the prophet ends with ridicule.

8. **Go, write it...in a table**—On a waxen tablet. Having delivered the foregoing prophecy, the prophet is bidden to make record of it, for a witness on its fulfilment of its truth. **Note it in a book**—The tablet is for a witness to the disbelieving people, on the prediction coming to pass; the parchment is probably for the prophet's school archives—a witness to all coming time.

9-11. The thing witnessed to is,

things, 'speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits: 11 Get you out of the way, turn aside out of the path, cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us. 12 Wherefore thus saith the Holy One of Israel, Because ye despise this word, and trust in 'oppression and perverseness, and stay thereon; 13 Therefore this iniquity shall be to you 'as a breach ready to fall, swelling out in a high wall, whose breaking 'cometh suddenly at an instant. 14 And 'he shall break it as the breaking of 'the potters' vessel that is broken in pieces; he shall not spare: so that there shall not be found in the bursting of it a sherd to take fire from the hearth, or to take water *withal* out of the pit. 15 For

Micah 2. 6.—^p 1 Kings 22. 13; Micah 2. 11.—³ Or, *fraud*.—^q Psal. 62. 3.—^r Chap. 29. 5.
^s Psal. 2. 9; Jer. 19. 11.—⁴ Heb. *the bottle of potters*.

that this is a rebellious people, lying children, etc. See note on chap. i, 2. They were a people unwilling to know any thing about the will of Jehovah; who desired their prophets to speak flatteries, not truths: or to adopt another line of thought, such as should encourage worldly plans, and utter no more of the eternal din, (as they wickedly deem it,) about the Holy One of Israel. **Cause the Holy One...to cease**—They would that the prophet should "cease" troubling them with God's denunciations.

12-14. Instead of complying with their desires—see above—the prophet again repeats the message from the very holy Name they so much dread to hear. Because they reject this **word**, "the law" of Jehovah, (verse 9,) the consequence to them is utter ruin; unseen, indeed, in its oncoming, yet rapidly approaching with sudden and crushing disaster. **As a breach...swelling out**—The similes are striking, like an unseen "breach" causing a hitherto unnoticed swell in the outward high wall, till suddenly the whole breaks and tumbles into ruin irretrievable; like the poor man's pot broken with so complete a smash that not a serviceable piece remains for holding a coal of fire or a drop of water in domestic uses. The broken piece of a potter's vessel is more commonly in our version called a potsherd.

thus saith the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel; "In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength: "and ye would not. **16** But ye said, No; for we will flee upon horses; therefore shall ye flee: and, We will ride upon the swift; therefore shall they that pursue you be swift. **17** "One thousand shall flee at the rebuke of one; at the rebuke of five shall ye flee: till ye be left as ^a a beacon upon the top of a mountain, and as an ensign on a hill.

z Verse 7; chapter 7. 4.—*u* Matt. 23. 37.—*v* Deut. 23, 25; 32. 30; Josh. 23. 10.—*5* Or, *a tree bereft of branches, or, boughs: or, a mast.*

15-17. The same Holy One continues. On condition alone of your turning back from Egypt and resting in my commands and counsels, can you be saved. **In returning... shall ye be saved**—This means change of mind from relying on Egypt and a "returning" to their duty to God. **In quietness**—Resting in calm trust on Jehovah alone. Herein is **your strength... ye said, No**—Utter rejection of Jehovah's proposition. They aspired for the glory of conquest after the manner of other nations. To the horses of Egypt, then, *Go ye*, was the reply; their swift steeds ye may have; not as the pursuers, but as the pursued—as the routed and overwhelmed, shall ye have them. **One thousand** of you shall flee from before the threatening attitude of even **one**, and your whole fleeing army shall scatter wide before even **five** of the enemy; so that because of the fewness of the number left they may be compared to a solitary **beacon** or tree on **the top of a mountain**.

18. Therefore—Alexander deems this a term of conclusion. Better thus than *moreover*, (Gesenius, Lowth, Barnes, Delitzsch, *et al.*) The sense is, You should, if rightly dealt with, be at once punished; yet, as God will mercifully wait for your return to him, "therefore" is your salvation still conditionally awaiting your decision to return. This doctrine is everywhere to be found in the Old Testament. The patience and compassion of Jehovah are on every page. God's pronounced mercifulness

18 And therefore will the Lord wait, that he may be gracious unto you, and therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you: for the Lord is a God of judgment: "blessed are all they that wait for him. **19** For the people shall dwell in Zion at Jerusalem: thou shalt weep no more: he will be very gracious unto thee at the voice of thy cry; when he shall hear it, he will answer thee. **20** And though the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction, yet shall not thy

w Psal. 2. 12; 34. 8; Jer. 17. 7.—*x* Chap. 65. 9.—*y* 1 Kings 22. 27; Psalm 127. 2.—*6* Or, *oppression.*—*z* Psalm 74. 9; Amos 8. 11.

throughout cannot be overlooked except by wilfully blinded eyes. **Judgment**—Jehovah is a God of "judgment." What! to punish and destroy? Yes, even this, when it is right for him to do so; and he alone knows when it is right, for being of mingled love and justice, he can make no mistake. The words, then, mean simply, Jehovah is a God of *right doing*. His ways "are true and righteous altogether."

19-26. Having opened thus the ever-pleasing thought of the prophet—namely, the divine forbearance—the way is prepared now for comfort to the devoted class of people in Jerusalem. **The people shall dwell in Zion**—He yearns for all to become devout, which, if they will, safety is a sure thing for the whole nation. The nation is between two fires—Egypt and Assyria. Worldly court partisans waver as to policy between these. The religious party denounce every object of trust but Jehovah. The prophet is their uncompromising leader. He encourages in no faint terms. The nation is kept down by the powers on either side, but he claims it is not extinct, with Mount Zion in their midst. Jehovah is ready to re-instate the nation in its true glory. Weeping shall cease! Crying to Jehovah shall be heard as soon as uttered! The prophet uses soaring words. He addresses the future as well as the present. **Though**—This is not in the Hebrew, yet the complete sense requires it, else neither member of the sentence is intelligi-

teachers be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers: **21** And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, *This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.* **22** ^bYe shall defile also the covering of ⁷thy graven images of silver, and the ornament of thy molten images of gold: thou shalt ^acast them away as a menstruous cloth; ^cthou shalt say unto it, Get thee hence. **23** ^dThen shall he give the rain of thy seed, that thou shalt sow the ground withal; and bread of the increase of the earth, and it shall be fat and plenteous: in that day shall thy cattle feed in large pastures. **24** The

^a Josh. 1. 7.—^b 2 Chron. 31. 1; chap. 2. 20; 31. 7.—⁷ Heb. *the graven images of thy silver*.—⁸ Heb. *scatter*.—^c Hosea 14. 8.—^d Matt. 6. 33; 1 Tim. 4. 8.

ble. **Bread of adversity, and the water of affliction**—Expressions for doled out bread and water, as is customary in sieges because of their scarcity: but on condition of return to Jehovah, these shall pass away, and plenteousness take their place. **Shall not thy teachers be removed**—Their “teachers,” or true prophets, were also often removed, or obliged to hide themselves, in times when the idolatrous anti-reformers were in complete power, but this evil should also come to an end. **A word behind thee**—“Behind thee” may be a figure drawn from shepherd life, and seems to intimate that some of the flock, instead of strictly following the shepherd as is the Eastern custom, had gone in front, and were wandering aside of the true way, when the shepherd’s voice “behind them” is heard in warning.

Defile...images—The true people are seen by the prophet in the glorious times, putting away idolatry as a polluted abomination. Ahaz had not been slow in filling Jerusalem with it. The images thus worshipped are to be cast away with utter disgust, as is also expressed in the final words, **Get...hence. Then shall he [Jehovah] give the rain of thy seed**—The rains needed to insure an ample harvest—the first rains in autumn, after seed sowing, the latter in the spring. Earthly images of this sort are figures of grand spiritual blessings

oxen likewise and the young asses that ear the ground shall eat ⁹clean provender, which hath been winnowed with the shovel and with the fan. **25** And there shall be ^eupon every high mountain, and upon every ¹⁰high hill, rivers and streams of waters in the day of the great slaughter, when the towers fall. **26** Moreover ^fthe light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day that the Lord bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound.

27 Behold, the name of the Lord cometh from far, burning with his anger, ¹¹and the burden thereof ¹²is heavy: his

⁹ Or, *savoury*. Heb. *leavened*.—^e Chap. 2. 14. 15: 44. 3.—¹⁰ Heb. *lifted up*.—^f Chapter 60. 19, 20.—¹¹ Or, *and the grievousness of flame*.—¹² Heb. *heaviness*.

to the people of Israel. **Fat and plenteous**—Fatness, fertility, plenty for man and beast, and every thing contributing to these, yield, in the Old Testament, the richest descriptions for conceptions spiritual. **Light...sun...sevenfold**—The sevenfold increase of the light of heaven’s luminaries, and the concentrated light of seven days into one, represent the advanced spiritual state of the children of Jehovah.

27, 28. The transition here is sudden. **The name**—The “name” of Jehovah is Jehovah himself, that is, Jehovah in absolute and distinctive personality as revealed in word and act. **Cometh from far**—The revelation of God’s righteousness cometh from all his works and providences. Manifestations of divine judgments are everywhere. God is judge. Nations are brought before him. Evil doing is condemned, and monuments thereof cover the world. The judgments now to be rendered are upon Assyria, the persecutor of Judah. The storm, ready to burst, is hovering over the world-power, but the description applies in principle to all judgment scenes. Jehovah comes in deliverance to all his trusting people through awful but necessary calamities to his enemies. **His anger**—His felt moral outrage against defiant independence of him. **Burden...is heavy**—Literally, *Grievous is the*

lips are full of indignation, and his tongue as a devouring fire: **28** And ^ghis breath, as an overflowing stream, ^hshall reach to the midst of the neck, to sift the nations with the sieve of vanity: and *there shall be* ⁱa bridle in the jaws of the people, causing *them* to err. **29** Ye shall have a song, as in the night ^kwhen a holy solemnity is kept; and gladness of heart, as when one goeth with a pipe to come into ^lthe mountain of the LORD, to the

^g Chap. 11. 4; 2 Thess. 2. 8.—^h Chapter 8. 8.
ⁱ Chap. 37. 29.—^k Psalm 42. 4.—^l Chap.
23.—¹³ Heb. *Rock*, Deut. 32. 4.—^m Chap. 29. 6.

flame. Possibly this means, "Tremendous is the bursting lightning which darts from the blackened heavens." **And his breath**—His Spirit moving, now gently, now in tornado force, as occasion calls; in this action it is violent, destructive. **As an overflowing stream**—Rushing forth as such a stream rushes. **Neck**—Or, divides at the neck. Only the head is yet out of peril. Perhaps meaning Assyria, not yet completely doomed. **Sieve of vanity**—Divine judgment sifts the nations, and what remains is emptiness, nothingness, destruction. Lowth calls it the winnowing fan of destruction. **Bridle**—In the jaws of unwilling nations, leading them into ways they did not intend. See Assyrian inscriptions.

Here are metaphors jumbled, but of striking force and of clear meaning. The figures melt into each other. A storm is conceived rising from the farthest horizon; the black cloud is turned into a sea of fire, or lightnings consuming where they strike, and raising volumes (burden) of smoke, all of which symbolizes the divine wrath, swelling as it were into a stream, covering men up to the neck, the same as in chap. viii, 8, which see. The judicial effect is the same as sifting chaff to the winds by the winnowing fan, common to this day in Palestine. All that is worth saving is left, the rest cast utterly away. Nations are destroyed, or diminished and held as by a "bridle" from pursuing and compassing their utterly selfish ends.

29. Ye shall have a song—*The* "song," as indicated by the emphatic

¹³ Mighty One of Israel. **30** ^mAnd the LORD shall cause ¹⁴his glorious voice to be heard, and shall show the lighting down of his arm, with the indignation of *his* anger, and *with* the flame of a devouring fire, *with* scattering, and tempest, ⁿand hailstones. **31** For ^othrough the voice of the LORD shall the Assyrian be beaten down, ^pwhich smote with a rod. **32** And ¹⁵in every place where the grounded staff shall pass, which the

¹⁴ Heb. *the glory of his voice*.—ⁿ Chap. 28. 2; 32. 19.—^o Ch. 37. 36.—^p Ch. 10. 5, 24.—¹⁵ Heb. *every passing of the rod founded*.

article in Hebrew. It shall commemorate divine deliverances as does *the* song at the holy passover solemnities. If it be the destruction of Sennacherib's army in one night (2 Kings xix, 35–37,) which here fits across the prophet's mind, how appropriate is this song occasion! How would all Jerusalem have resounded with hallelujahs the whole night long had the people known the work of destruction then going on in the plains toward Egypt! But it is the same always. Isaiah here pictures what is ever true of God's people in extremities. They "shall have a song," celebrating Jehovah's grand deliverances.

30, 31. Verses 27, 28, depict the approach of the great judge; here the description of the judgment begins. **Voice. . . heard**—God's "voice" is "heard," also, as the delivered ones shout their song, and the action of his **arm** is seen—image of corporal chastisement. **Indignation. . . anger**—Manifested as fury, under figure of an animal snorting, with flames bursting from its nostrils, leaving behind a scattering, the **work** of a tempest, and stones of hail. Here, again, our prophet overrides modern rhetorical refinement, and mixes fire and hail together. The Assyrian can stand no such a rush of destructive forces. **Which smote with a rod**—That is, the hitherto persecuting Assyrian. The smiter is now himself smitten with a vengeance.

32. The grounded staff—This rendering is generally rejected as unintelligible. It is generally agreed by scholars that it means "rod of doom,"

LORD shall ¹⁶ lay upon him, *it* shall be with tabrets and harps: and in battles of ¹⁷ shaking will he fight with it. **33** ^r For Tophet is ordained ¹⁸ of old; yea, for the king it is prepared; he hath made *it* deep and large: the pile thereof is fire and much wood; the breath of the

¹⁶ Heb. *cause to rest upon him*.—*q* Chap. 11. 15; 19. 16.—¹⁷ Or, *against them*.—*r* Jer. 7. 31; 19. 6.

that is, the rod appointed to punish. The text may read thus: *And it shall be that every passage* [stroke, Henderson] *of the rod of doom which Jehovah shall lay* [cause to rest] *on him* [the Assyrian] *shall be with tabrets and harps* [accompanied with music on the part of the delivered ones] *and shakings of wars*, [or shocks of war, conducted in judgment by Jehovah.] While God visits furious judgments upon all defiant peoples, his own people are to join in songs of thanksgiving and fidelity to their deliverer. God governs the world. In all cases divine care “turns the tables” in behalf of the good and against the enemies of the good. **Tabrets**—Drums of one head, or tambourines, beaten to music sung at festival entertainments, and many other occasions.

33. Tophet—This word occurs here possibly because “tabret” had just been used, from a habit of our prophet of indulging in *paronomasia*. Both words are from the same root, or from roots nearly identical. Originally “tophet” probably meant a music grove, or a place where the tambourine was prominent in the music. The king’s garden, near by in the deep valley, just southeast of Jerusalem, may have had some relation to the music grove or tophet. The place afterward became abominable by being made the place for consuming the offals of animals offered in sacrifice on the altar. The worshippers of Moloch are also said to have made it still more abominable by the sacrifice of children in the burning furnace into which the huge image of Moloch in that place had been constructed. The perpetual burning loathsomeness, from the consuming offal, made the place an image of eternal torture in the New Testament associations of the

LORD, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it.

CHAPTER XXXI.

WOE to them ^a that go down to Egypt for help; and ^b stay on horses, and trust in chariots, because

¹⁸ Hebrew, *from yesterday*.—*a* Chapter 30. 2; 36. 6; Ezekiel 17. 15.—*b* Psalm 20. 7; chapter 36. 9.

spot. Its name in Greek is *gehenna*, from the Hebrew word rendered valley of Hinnom. For a full description see SMITH’S *Bible Dictionary*.

The figure here is, that “tophet” has been prepared to receive the king of Assyria; that for this purpose it has been enlarged, made deep and broad, with a mouth vast enough to swallow up his whole army. Wood has been massed for a huge burning; the breath of Jehovah is to fire this mass; which, like a stream of brimstone, is to burn with an intense and inextinguishable heat. The figures of Rev. xxi, 8, 10 are hence derived, to signify the everlasting torments of hell.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE FOURTH WOE.

Differently presented, and perhaps better, the same subjects respecting alliance with Egypt are here continued. Perhaps a space of time intervened between the two presentations.

1-3. Stay on horses...trust in chariots—Horses abounded in Egypt. Solomon had filled his stables from that country. The ancients thought more of cavalry than of infantry in war. The Hebrews, denied of it by their law, on becoming worldly under the monarchy were distressingly uneasy without cavalry. This gives occasion for the prophet to denounce it as a vain help, and he hurls his woes upon it uncompromisingly. He still preaches dependence alone upon Jehovah their God as a sufficient safety. But the princes did not look to him. Hezekiah himself, good king as he was, was timid, at first sight, of the approaching Assyrian strength upon

they are many; and in horsemen, because they are very strong; but they look not unto the Holy One of Israel, "neither seek the LORD! 2 Yet he also is wise, and will bring evil, and "will not ¹call back his words: but will arise against the house of the evil doers, and against the help of them that work iniquity. 3 Now the Egyptians are "men, and not God; and their horses flesh, and not spirit. When the LORD shall stretch out his hand, both he that helpeth shall fall, and he that is holpen shall fall down, and they all shall fail together. 4 For thus hath the LORD spoken unto me, 'Like as the lion and the young

lion roaring on his prey, when a multitude of shepherds is called forth against him, *he* will not be afraid of their voice, nor abase himself for the ²noise of them: "so shall the LORD of hosts come down to fight for mount Zion, and for the hill thereof. 5 "As birds flying, so will the LORD of hosts defend Jerusalem; ¹defending also he will deliver *it*; and passing over he will preserve *it*.

6 Turn ye unto *him* from whom the children of Israel have ^kdeeply revolted. 7 For in that day every man shall ¹cast away his idols of silver, and ²his idols of gold, which your own hands have made unto you *for* ^ma sin. 8 Then

^e Dan. 9. 13; Hosea 7. 7.—^d Num. 23. 19.—¹ Heb. *remove*.—^e Psalm 146. 3, 5.—^f Hosea 11. 10; Amos 3. 8.—² Or, *multitude*.

^g Chap. 42. 13.—^h Deut. 32. 11; Psa. 91. 4.—ⁱ Psa. 37. 40.—^k Hos. 9. 9.—^l Ch. 2. 20; 30. 22.—³ Heb. *the idols of his gold*.—^m 1 Ki. 12. 30.

him. The prophet insists that God knows best whether Judah needs foreign aid; that he has the people in his own guidance and care if they will; that he will discomfit all outside aid, and punish Judah for seeking it; that divine help is indispensable; that Egypt is deceitful, weak, and untrustworthy; and that in depending on such help, both the helper and the helped shall be overthrown.

4, 5. The prophet, as if from a new assurance from Heaven, reasserts Jehovah as their only protector. He illustrates by two comparisons worthy of Homer. (See HOMER'S *Iliad*, xviii, 161, 162.) In quite close rendering Isaiah says: "As a lion growls, and a young lion, over his prey, against whom a multitude of shepherds is called forth, at their cry is not frightened, and at their noise is not humbled, so will Jehovah of hosts come down to fight upon (or over, or in behalf of) Mount Zion, and upon his hill." Just so cool and unconcerned will Jehovah be at the loud threats and dashing movements of the approaching Assyrian army upon Mount Zion. Another kind of protection is implied in the other simile: "Like fluttering birds, so will Jehovah of hosts screen Jerusalem, screening and delivering, sparing and setting free." The weak bird defends its young with courage to the death ere surrendering them. How infinitely more will God defend his people.

6. The children of Israel have deeply revolted—The remarks to be made here are: 1) Monotheism was the fundamental idea of their religion. 2) A covenant between Israel and their God was a covenant which the latter never broke. 3) Priests and prophets held the whole nation solemnly and organically bound to that covenant. Based on these facts, the prophets, when they spoke, spoke to the whole nation. None was to be excused. The part of the people who broke the covenant could not be exonerated. They determined the external, national destinies of all. The fate of all hung on them. The external theocracy was overthrown by them. Hence the few who, as individuals, were true to God—who never broke covenant—constituted the theocracy, the remnant, the true Israel, the only Church in Israel. (See Rom. ix, xi.) The protection implied in these verses implies a return to God of the revolted children of Israel of the sixth verse. The condition then made, "Turn ye unto him" is responded to. Doubtless the prophet was sure the casting away of idolatry was never likely to take place till the utter overthrow of the nation, and the great trial of the people in captivity. Idolatry never appeared after the great captivity.

7, 8. In that day—The day of the surrender of idolatry. Idols of silver... of gold—By such means idolatry was raised to precious attractiveness.

shall the Assyrian ^a fall with the sword, not of a mighty man; and the sword, not of a mean man, shall devour him: but he shall flee ⁴ from the sword, and his young men shall be ⁶ discomfited. **9** And ^o he shall pass over to ⁷ his strong hold for fear, and his princes shall be afraid of the ensign, saith the Lord, whose fire *is* in Zion, and his furnace in Jerusalem.

CHAPTER XXXII.

BEHOLD, ^a a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment. **2** And a man shall

ⁿ 2 Kings 19. 35, 36; chap. 37. 36.—4 Or, *for fear of the sword*.—5 Or, *tributary*. Heb. *for melting, or, tribute*.—^o Chap. 37. 37.—6 Heb. *his rock shall pass away for fear*.—7 Or, *his strength*.

9. His strong hold—Sennacherib, as some commentators hold, but better, the historic absolute power of Assyria concentered in all her great kings. This is a powerless refuge if Jehovah should rise upon it, as he surely will. The consuming fire of God's presence in **Zion**, the burning heat from the great altar-hearth in **Jerusalem**, shall certainly devour that old boasting foe of Jehovah. God proves himself the only one in whom to trust. He is the only great conqueror. The **sword** of no **mighty man** shall subdue Assyria. Jehovah has means for victory which mortal man's hand cannot command, nor wield if he could.

CHAPTER XXXII.

As if the previous exhortation (chap. xxxi, 6) has been heeded, and the opposing great world powers like Assyria have been overcome, the sifted, purified Jews now, in the eye of the prophet, enter into a new kingdom organization, including not the idolatrous elements of the nation, but only the reformed, obedient, and holy remnant. Over this kingdom reigns One, the essence of whose being is truth and righteousness. Those whom he employs as his vicegerents shall be inspired to rule with inflexible right-doing, and in himself shall be protection unfailing, and at the same time satisfying, refreshing, and invigorating.

be as a hiding place from the wind, and ^b a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a ¹ great rock in a weary land. **■** And ^c the eyes of them that see shall not be dim, and the ears of them that hear shall hearken. **4** The heart also of the ² rash shall understand knowledge, and the tongue of the stammerers shall be ready to speak ³ plainly. **5** The vile person shall be no more called liberal, nor the churl said to be bountiful. **6** For the ^d vile person will speak villany, and his heart will work iniquity, to practise hypocrisy, and to utter error against the

^a Psalm 45. 1; Jeremiah 23. 5; Hosea 3. 5; Zechariah 9. 2.—^b Chap. 4. 6; 25. 4.—1 Heb. *heavy*.—^c Chap. 29. 18; 35. 5, 6.—2 Hebrew, *hasty*.—3 Or, *elegantly*.—^d Psalm 15. 4; Mal. 3. 18.

The figures here used are but the expansion of those used in chap. iv, 8 and chap. xxv, 4. Only the traveller in an oriental desert can fully appreciate what these figures imply. See *The Lord's Land*, by RIDGWAY; also *The Land and the Book*, by THOMSON.

1. Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness—Who is he? Possibly the good, but yet imperfect, Hezekiah stands in the prophet's foreground; but more probably he is depicting the surroundings of the expected Messiah.

2. A man...hiding place—One greater and every way more competent as a protector than a merely human person. Jehovah in the person of the Messiah.

3, 4. Eyes...not be dim...ears...hearken—Under which Messiah the process of heart-hardening will not be the rule, as in the prophet's time, but the exception. He is speaking of times when the present moral order shall be reversed in a large degree: when conscience shall be normally educated, and false views and tendencies will not prevail.

5-8. Vile person—A fool in the scriptural sense, one who knows well enough, but knows unwisely, viciously. **Liberal**—Noble. **Churl**—One acting niggardly. Messianic times are of gradual growth. Radical moral changes are not wrought in an hour. Steadily the changes go on, until they end in universal righteousness and

LORD, to make empty the soul of the hungry; and he will cause the drink of the thirsty to fail. **7** The instruments also of the churl *are* evil: he deviseth wicked devices to destroy the poor with lying words, even ⁴when the needy speaketh right. **8** But the liberal deviseth liberal things; and by liberal things shall he ⁵stand.

9 Rise up, ye women ⁶that are at ease; hear my voice, ye careless daughters; give ear unto my speech. **10** ⁶Many days and years shall ye be troubled, ye

careless women: for the vintage shall fail, the gathering shall not come.

11 Tremble, ye women that are at ease; be troubled, ye careless ones: strip you, and make you bare, and gird *sackcloth* upon your loins. **12** They shall lament for the teats, for ⁷the pleasant fields, for the fruitful vine. **13** ⁷Upon the land of my people shall come up thorns and briers; ⁸yea, upon all the houses of joy *in* ⁸the joyous city: **14** ⁸Because the palaces shall be forsaken: the multitude of the city shall be left; the ⁹forts and

⁴ Or, *when he speaketh against the poor in judgment.*—⁵ Or, *be established.*—⁶ Amos 6. 1.—⁶ Heb. *Days above a year.*—⁷ Heb. *the fields of desire.*

⁷ Chapter 34. 13; Hosea 9. 6.—⁸ Or, *burning upon,* etc.—⁹ Chapter 22. 2.—^h Chapter 27. 10.—⁹ Or, *cliffs and watchtowers.*

peace. The prophet here gives persons, qualities, and things their right names. The fool, or "vile person," cannot, in that day, as now, pass for a noble man. The niggard or "churl" shall have no name for being generous, for making small gifts go for much giving. **The instruments also of the churl are** devices for making himself richer at the cost of the poor. On the other hand, the noble man is the liberal man; kind to all, he supplies wants with generosity, and by such a name **shall he stand.**

APPENDIX TO THE FOURTH WOE—ADDRESS TO THE WOMEN.

9. There is an abrupt change here. From men in high life to women in high life the prophet now turns. All aglow with views of the glorious coming time in his closing address to the men, he comes suddenly back to the real state of things for a separate admonition to the women. **Rise up, ye women**—Not a physical rising up is meant, though the form of address is like to that of Lamech to his wives, (Gen. iv, 23.) but an inward rousing of the conscience. **At ease...careless ones**—Women at ease, and self secure in luxurious living, not dreaming of calamity and unprepared for it.

10. Many days and years—Literally, *Days upon a year*, or many days added to a year, as if answering the question, "When shall these troubles come;" and the time given is, *More than a year hence, but not two years.* The light-hearted confidence is to be

dashed, and timely warning is here given.

11. Strip you...sackcloth—This means to put on signs of grief. "Sackcloth" instead of daily gay apparel.

12. Lament, etc.—Better rendered, *Smiting the breasts*, as on funeral occasions. **Pleasant fields**—The loss of these, and the loss of successive vintages, are the ground of lament. Desolation generally is to befall the proud daughters of Zion.

13, 14. Upon the land...thorns and briers—Recurrence again to what is yet to happen to Judah and Jerusalem makes the language of the prophet in the original grammatically complicated, just as is common with the sacred prophetic writers when, almost with the fiery spirit of indignation, they dilate on the lawlessness and disobedience of the people, and the retribution that is sure to follow. On Judah throughout grim desolation is to come. In the place of harvest fields and vineyards will be "briers and thorns." **Upon all the houses of joy**—Even the aforesaid populous Jerusalem is to be thus covered; that is, its desolate streets and broken down walls and houses are to become as a shapeless, entangled thicket. The homes where women so thoughtlessly lived, never dreaming of an end of their gayety and pleasure, and the strong **towers and palaces**, are all literally to be laid waste, and rooms and cells therein to become hiding places for wild animals, or for use to the scattered peasantry in enclos-

towers shall be for dens for ever, a joy of wild asses, a pasture of flocks; **15** Until ¹the Spirit be poured upon us from on high, and ²the wilderness be a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be counted for a forest. **16** Then judgment shall dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness remain in the fruitful field. **17** ¹And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of

righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever. **18** And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places; **19** ^aWhen it shall hail, coming down ^aon the forest; ¹⁰and the city shall be low in a low place. **20** Blessed are ye that sow beside all waters, that send forth *thither* the feet of ^othe ox and the ass.

ⁱ Psalm 104. 30; Joel 2. 28.—^k Chap. 29. 17; 35. 2.—^l James 3. 18.—^m Chap. 30. 30.

ⁿ Zech. 11. 2.—¹⁰ Or, and the city shall be utterly abused.—^o Chap. 30. 24.

ing their **flocks** by night. All is to occur in a short time—"in days added to a year," a short period hence: margin of verse 10.

15-17. Until the Spirit be poured upon us—Then shall begin the dispensation of the great moral changes referred to in verses 1-8. The captivity will sift the just from the unjust and disobedient. The remnant shall return. Morally, the land shall become a **fruitful field**, where **righteousness** shall flourish, and **peace**, its result, shall abide with **quietness and assurance for ever**; that is, for a long, long time.

18. A peaceable habitation—At such a time the moral influences shall be so great that God's people shall tranquilly pass their lives in peaceful homes, **sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places**; that is, faith gives sweet rest in God and blessed association with him.

19. It shall hail, coming down on the forest—That is, the fierce storm shall overthrow it. Hail storms in Palestine are fearful agencies of destruction. Note the scenes under Joshua at Beth-horon, and at Megiddo under Barak. Joshua x, 11; Judges v, 20. **And the city, etc.**—If this verse is in its right place, it is another case of a sudden mental association, in the mind of the prophet, with the destroying power, Assyria. Assyria is to destroy Judah as an event ordered to precede this beginning of spiritual renovation of redeemed Israel. "The forest," then, denotes the degenerated children of Judah, and "the city," is destroyed Jerusalem. In the same mental association. Assyria, as a destroying power, covers

the seat of that power throughout the Euphrates valley; it ideally includes the same power transferred to Babylon. The verse would seem to be a parenthetical interruption to the course of thought in this place.

20. Blessed are ye that sow—In the coming happy times, when great activity shall be among God's people in planting his principles everywhere. **Beside**—Better, *upon all waters*. The allusion may be to the practice in overflowing river countries, like Egypt and Mesopotamia, of sowing rice in the still waters at each overflow, and then sending cattle—the **ox and the ass**—freely to tread in the grain. The idea is—still using the above practice as a figure—that the passage relates wholly to moral cultivation; that the planting of the truth is to be universal; that these truths are free as the air for all men, just as "the ox and the ass" are free to range in patches of planted rice lands, or in extended pasture lands. No doubt the verse implies the happy moral condition of coming times, and the free activity of enterprises to improve mankind generally.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE FIFTH WOE.

The poem or prophecy here introduced closes the series of woes which began with chapter xxviii, each woe forming a text for discourse respectively, concerning the destruction of Samaria, (chap. xxviii,) the impiety and folly of Judah, (chap. xxix,) the danger of its league with Egypt, (chaps. xxx, xxxi,) and the present one, against the Assyrian power and the enemies of

O. T.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

WOE to thee "that spoilest, and thou *wast* not spoiled; and deal-est treacherously, and they dealt not treacherously with thee! "when thou shalt cease to spoil, thou shalt be spoiled; and when thou shalt make an end to deal treacherously, they shall deal treacherously with thee. **2** O LORD, be gracious unto us; "we have waited for thee: be thou their arm every morning, our salvation also in the time of trouble. **3** At the noise of the tumult the people

a Chap. 21. 2; Hab. 2. 8.—*b* Rev. 13. 10.—*c* Chap. 25. 9.—*d* Psa. 97. 9.

God's people generally, chap. xxxiii. This last was written continuously with the preceding, and probably about the fourteenth year of Hezekiah's reign, at the time when danger to Jerusalem seemed greatest; that is, when (2 Kings, chap. xix) Sennacherib would make no terms. He had devastated the land generally, and now threatened Jerusalem if unconditional surrender were not made at once. It is interesting to observe that in each of these woes the element of promise to Judah gains. This is due to the gradual reforms under Hezekiah, despite of some mistakes he made, as well as of the almost desperate odds he had to contend with in the early part of his reign. **Woe to thee**—The spoiler, whose turn to be himself spoiled is just at hand. Little does the Assyrian king think this. Little hope is now left to the people of Jerusalem, except earnest, importunate prayer, to which, in the words (or the like) of the prophet, they resort.

2. Be gracious unto us—As the prophet puts it, the prayer is calm, but full of assurance. There is no vagueness or uncertainty of hope. **Their arm**—Thy people's and my own (Isaiah's) "arm," **every morning**: for danger presses every additional day of the invasion. **Our salvation**—That is, our complete deliverance.

3, 4. The prophet is not left in doubt. He sees the answer. The deliverance is yet future, but he sees it as if it were past, or now transpiring.

fled; at the lifting up of thyself the nations were scattered. **4** And your spoil shall be gathered *like* the gathering of the caterpillar: as the running to and fro of locusts shall he run upon them. **5** "The LORD is exalted: for he dwelleth on high: he hath filled Zion with judgment and righteousness. **6** And wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of thy times, and strength of ¹salvation: the fear of the LORD is his treasure. **7** Behold, their ²valiant ones shall cry without: "the ambassadors

¹ Heb. *salvations*.—² Or, *messengers*.—*e* 2 Kings 18. 18, 37.

At the noise of the tumult the people (Assyrian) fled; at the lifting up of thyself—Words figuratively expressing the silent power of Jehovah in destroying the enemy. See chap. xxxvii, 36, 37. A demonstration of thunder and great noise from the heavens is unnecessarily assumed by some. **Your spoil**—That of the destroyed and routed armies. **Shall be gathered**—By the inhabitants of Jerusalem going to the evening's abandoned camps, and, like hungry locusts and caterpillars, (as they sweep clean every thing on which they light,) hastily seizing every thing they find.

5, 6. The Lord is exalted—A psalm of joy. It suits the connexion well to regard these verses as forming a chorus opened by the Jews. They praise Jehovah for their remarkable deliverance. **Filled Zion with judgment**—Destroying the Assyrian is the same as to fill Jerusalem with reverence for His name. **Thy times**—Is supposed by some to mean the time of Hezekiah; by others, that of the Messiah; and by still others, the sincere believer's times. It matters little which, as in any case the sense is quite the same.

7. Notwithstanding the great occasion looked for in the choral strain above, there is occasion also for grief. **Their valiant ones**—The lion-like heroes, messengers sent to Sennacherib or his officers (see 2 Kings xvii, 14) with the silver and the gold demanded as condition of peace, but which availed nothing with the truce-breaker. These deplore the state of things

of peace shall weep bitterly. **8** 'The highways lie waste, the wayfaring man ceaseth: 'he hath broken the covenant, he hath despised the cities, he regardeth no man. **9** 'The earth mourneth and languisheth: Lebanon is ashamed and hewn down: Sharon is like a wilderness; and Bashan and Carmel shake off their fruits. **10** 'Now will I rise, saith the Lord; now will I be exalted; now will I lift up myself. **11** 'Ye shall conceive chaff, ye shall bring forth stubble: your breath, as fire, shall devour you. **12** And the people shall be as the burnings of lime: 'as thorns cut up shall they be burned in the fire.

f Judg. 5. 6.—*g* 2 Kings 18. 14-17.—*h* Chap. 24. 4.—*3* Or, *withered away*.—*i* Psalm 12. 5.—*k* Psa. 7. 14; chap. 59. 4.—*l* Chap. 9. 18.—*m* Chap. 49. 1.

that would follow, namely, Jerusalem's destruction, to all earthly view most probable.

8, 9. The highways lie waste—In disregard of his covenant the enemy still would ravage the country, render impassable the usual highways, cut off travel, break up villages and cities, and show mercy to none. Such treachery called for the world's detestation and Heaven's speediest retribution; this is a sense in which **the earth**, or the land, **mourneth**; in which **Lebanon**, noble in its cedars and towering heights, blushes in very shame; in which **Sharon**, the *Shephala*, or flowery plain on the sea, wilts to desolation; in which the east Jordanic **Bashan**, with its rich pastures and oaks, and **Carmel**—the synonyme for greatest fertility—forget their rightful glory and hide away through mortification at such stupendous treachery.

10-12. This iniquity is now full. The day of judgment to Assyria has come. As though indifferently sitting still, Jehovah has looked on long enough, and says, **Now will I rise... now... be exalted; now... lift up myself**—The thrice repeated "now" denotes earnest business. On hearing this the prophet knows what is to come, and cries out as if to the enemy, **Ye... conceive chaff, ye... bring forth stubble**—Your vainglorious swell and threat amounts to utter nothing. Your furious, snorting menace is turned back to you, an in-

13 Hear, *ye that are far off*, what I have done; and, *ye that are near*, acknowledge my might. **14** The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings? **15** He that *walketh* *righteously*, and speaketh *uprightly*; he that despiseth the gain of *oppressions*, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of *blood*, and *shuteth* his eyes from seeing evil; **16** He shall dwell on *high*; his place of defence *shall be* the munitions of rocks: bread shall be

n Psalm 15. 2; 24. 4.—*4* Heb. *in righteousnesses*.—*5* Heb. *uprightnesses*.—*6* Or, *deceits*.—*7* Heb. *bloods*.—*8* Psalm 119. 37.—*8* Heb. *heights*, or, *high places*.

ward, self-consuming flame. God's purpose is to make the nations here represented in this your devouring army to become utterly consumed, **as the burnings of lime**; speedily consumed, **as thorns**, or dead brushwood, cut and dried for immediate heating.

13-16. And then, as if this judgment were accomplished, the prophet turns to the sinners by whom himself, as counsellor to the pious king, has been so long baffled in Jerusalem. These he addresses as the **near** ones; those living to witness the power of the Almighty in breaking the Assyrian yoke. Hitherto they had scouted Isaiah's theory of deliverance from such a source, and they sought aid from Egypt. The **far-off** peoples are also called to witness this almighty power in behalf of Israel. The sinners in Jerusalem are now struck dumb, and they are forced to say, **Who among us shall—rather, can—dwell with the devouring fire... everlasting burnings**—That is, in such a fire as that which has so signally destroyed the Assyrian forces? The parallel member states the same thing, only with more intense emotion. The answer is, in substance, the same as Psa. xv. **He that walketh righteously**, etc., in all the relations of life; **despiseth the gain of oppressions**, hazarding every thing to be just, absolutely just, etc.: only such can endure the presence and power of a just God,

given him; his waters *shall be sure*.
17 Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty: they shall behold ⁹the land that is very far off. **18** Thine heart shall meditate terror. ¹⁰Where is the scribe? where is the ¹⁰receiver? where is he that counted the towers? **19** ¹¹Thou shalt not see a fierce people, ¹¹a people of a deeper speech than thou canst perceive; of a ¹¹stammering tongue, *that thou canst not understand*. **20** ¹²Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see ¹²'Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be

⁹ Heb. *the land of far distances*.—^p 1 Cor. 1. 20.—¹⁰ Heb. *weigher*.—^q 2 Kings 19. 32.—^r Deut. 28. 49, 50; Jer. 5. 15.—¹¹ Or, *ridiculous*.—^s Psalm 48. 12.—^t Psalm 46. 5; 125. 1, 2.

and they, seeking to be entirely righteous, shall, in all events, be secure. Spiritual plenty shall abound to them. Those who are of this character in Jerusalem now realize their own more exultant fortune over the sinners that have counselled opposition in civil affairs in Judah.

17. The good king, Hezekiah, hitherto so depressed by apparently inevitable destruction before him, puts on an aspect humble, yet cheerful and gladsome, and **thine eyes**—all eyes in Jerusalem—shall see him thus elevated to grander faith through Jehovah's victory wrought for him and the people. **The land that is very far off**—Possibly a typical view, this, of the future oppressed Messiah's victory and of the glorious land of promise yet to be seen extended over all lands, all cleared of enemies, and the sovereignty of Messiah remaining undisputed.

18, 19. Meditate terror—So joyous may the people now be, that the dreadful past is a fact to be thought of (*meditated upon*) as long since having transpired, and to be recalled by effort of memory. Thoughts recently so engrossing about the **scribe**, or manager of funds for the war—about the **receiver**, or the weigher of the moneys—or about him who **counted**, that is, examined the strength of the towers—are now all vanished amid the present joy. **Not see a fierce people...stammering tongue**—No more are the rough Assyrians, a people of barbarous dialect, or a wretched, ill

taken down; ¹³not one of ¹³the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken. **21** But there the glorious Lord *will be* unto us a place ¹²of broad rivers and streams; wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby. **22** For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our ¹³lawgiver, ¹⁴the Lord is our king; he will save us. **23** ¹⁴Thy tacklings are loosed; they could not well strengthen their mast; they could not spread the sail: then is the prey of a great spoil divided; the lame take the

^u Chap. 37. 33.—^v Chap. 54. 2.—¹² Hebrew, *broad of spaces*, or, *hands*.—²⁰ James 4. 12.—¹³ Heb. *statute-maker*.—¹⁴ Psalm 89. 18.—¹⁴ Or, *They have forsaken thy tacklings*.

sounding Semitic *patois*, to be seen around Jerusalem.

20–22. But **Zion** in her victory and glory may be seen, and the command is to **look upon** her, now a **quiet habitation**, where religious worship may be resumed in peace. **A tabernacle...not to be taken down**—The figure of the tent is applied—a symbol of simple, holy, old patriarchal life—well pitched against storms, and secure against marauders. **There**—That is, in Jerusalem, **the Lord** is ever present, glorious in spiritual agency and results—like to physical and civil affairs, to broad, fertilizing streams all around, upon which no galley with oars, nor staunch war ship, shall venture—but the scene shall be evermore one of peace, plenty, and security. **For the Lord, our judge, lawgiver, and king**, shall save us.

23, 24. Thy tacklings are loosed—By curious prophetic association again, the mention of war galley and ship turns the mind back, as it were, to the wrecked Assyrian ship, which, with its broken ropes, ("tacklings,") and loosened mast-base, can no more spread sail. But the Jews now have their opportunity. The heretofore plunderer is now the thoroughly plundered one. All the spoil of his ships the wreckers may seize. This is the view of most interpreters, but not of Drechsler or Delitzsch. The Jews need not now say **I am sick**; the oldest and most infirm may go after the enemy's abandoned spoil and be

prey. **24** And the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick: ⁷ the people that dwell therein *shall be forgiven their iniquity.*

CHAPTER XXXIV.

COME ^a near, ye nations, to hear; and hearken, ye people: ^b let the earth hear, and ^c all that is therein; the world, and all things that come forth of it. **2** ^e For the indignation of the Lord is upon all nations, and *his* fury upon all their armies: he hath utterly destroyed them, he hath delivered them to the slaughter. **3** Their slain also shall be cast out, and ^d their stink shall come up out of their carcasses, and the mountains

^v Jer. 50. 20. — ^a Psalm 49. 1. — ^b Deut. 32. 1. — ^c Hebrew, *the fulness thereof*. — ^e Jer. 25. 19, 29; Joel 3. 9, 14; Zech. 14. 13. — ^d Joel 2. 20. — ^e Psa. 102. 26; Ezek. 32. 7, 8; Joel 2. 31; 3. 15;

enriched thereby. They may do so freely and with impunity, for their iniquities are forgiven. The calamities of the invasion are overpast.

PART VI.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

JUDGMENT ON ALL THE WORLD,
MORE ESPECIALLY UPON EDM, chap.
xxxiv, xxxv.

The contents of these chapters form one prophecy, which closes the series written in Isaiah's active prophetic life, the second series, from chap. xl-lxvi, having been prepared more privately for the use, probably, of his disciples, in the prophetic school at Jerusalem. In this chapter the enemies of God generally—of whom Edom is the representative—are denounced. The prophecy, as a whole, repeats the truth of Israel's ultimate, entire deliverance from all enemies, and its happier times (chap. xxxv) under Messiah.

1-3. Come near, ye nations—All mankind is summoned, including all creation in the high poetic ideal, to witness the final fate of all Jehovah's foes. The deliverance is apocalyptic, and the usual imagery in such compositions (see Ezek. xxxix, 11) is employed. God's foes are doomed to an utter curse, their corpses are cast out unburied, and are washed away

shall be melted with their blood. **4** And ^a all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be ^c rolled together as a scroll: ^b and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as ^d a falling *fig* from the fig tree. **5** For ^e my sword shall be bathed in heaven: behold, it ^f shall come down upon Idumea, and upon the people of my curse, to judgment. **6** The sword of the Lord is filed with blood, it is made fat with fatness, *and* with the blood of lambs and goats, with the fat of the kidneys of rams: for ^g the Lord hath a sacrifice in Bozrah, and a great slaughter in the land of Idumea. **7** And

Matt. 24. 29; 2 Peter 3. 10. — ^f Rev. 6. 14. — ^g Chap. 14. 12. — ^h Rev. 6. 13. — ⁱ Jer. 46. 10. — ^k Jer. 49. 7; Mal. 1. 4. — ^l Chap. 63. 1; Jer. 49. 13; Zeph. 1. 7.

(melted) as with a descending torrent.

4. The language here relates to the *last things* in the wicked human world. It is not symbolic, for symbol relates to an idea; it is not typical, for type relates to an antitype in persons or things; it is simply poetical, intended to indicate terrific revolution; sudden, total, appalling change. In the same way is the reference 2 Pet. iii, 10-12, to be understood. Also, Rev. vi, 14. The dissolving of the stars of heaven may come from the idea of their burning out like a lamp wick, and all becoming suddenly dark. The rolling up of the expanse of the heavens is easily conceived from the *scroll*, or ancient book, (like our map,) being rolled up and removed out of sight.

5-7. For my sword—Poetical instrument of vengeance, and its use an ethical necessity against conscious wrong doers. **Be bathed—**Or, *made drunk*, (Septuagint and Vulgate;) a figure from Deut. xxxii, 42, and kept up in Revelation, from wine of the wrath of God. **In heaven—**The seat of the divine plans upon Idumæa, or Edom, representatively used for all peoples and nations warring against Jehovah's cause. Nothing can expiate their crimes of incorrigible rebellion but their sacrifice. As all sin requires this, through use of the blood and fat of victims, so Edom, in one of its chief localities, **Bozrah**, for example, situated in its eastern hills,

the ²unicorns shall come down with them, and the bullocks with the bulls; and their land shall be ³soaked with blood, and their dust made fat with fatness. **8** For *it is* the day of the Lord's ^mvengeance, and the year of recompenses for the controversy of Zion. ⁿAnd the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof shall become burning pitch. **10** It shall not be quenched night nor day; ^othe smoke thereof shall go up for ever:

² Or, *rhinoceroses*.—³ Or, *drunken*.—^m Chap. 63. 4.—ⁿ See Deut. 29. 23.—^o Rev. 14. 11: 18. 18; 19. 3.—^p Mal. 1. 4.

(not the "Bozrah" of the north, in the Hauran,) shall witness a great sacrificial slaughter, thorough, final, making clean sweep of men and animals, even wild, fierce, strong, young and old animals, all representing every class of men ranked among God's potent and malignant foes. **Unicorns**—Is of doubtful meaning. Delitzsch and Gesenius translate it *buffalo*; Bochart, *gazelle*. Neither is satisfactory. The original word, *R'ēm*, means a roaring, untamed animal of great strength and fierceness, and answers as much to *wild bull* (possibly *buffalo* bull) as to any thing else which present knowledge of the ancient natural history of Palestine can supply. The rhinoceros may have rarely touched that territory in the warm jungles of the Ghor near the Dead Sea, but of this there is no other knowledge than what is possibly implied in the word itself. All these go down together, and in this way does Jehovah avenge Edom, a people figuratively comprehending all his enemies.

8-10. Day of the Lord's vengeance—Sure as the pillars of God's throne stand, divine judgment must overtake wrong and wrongdoers, and Zion, or the Church of God, must be vindicated and defended. The ideal of most terrific punishment is found in the terms **brimstone** and **burning pitch**; in the unquenchable fire; in the smoke forever ascending, and in the desert gloom and the impassable waste, that befall the land thus visited. These terms, used as mere figures here, are expanded into

^pfrom generation to generation it shall lie waste; none shall pass through it for ever and ever. **11** ^qBut the ^rcormorant and the bittern shall possess it; the owl also and the raven shall dwell in it: and ^rhe shall stretch out upon it the line of confusion, and the stones of emptiness. **12** They shall call the nobles thereof to the kingdom, but none shall be there, and all her princes shall be nothing. **13** And ^sthorns shall come up in her palaces, nettles and brambles in the fortresses thereof: and ^tit shall be a hab-

^q Chap. 14. 23; Zeph. 2. 14; Rev. 18. 2.—^r Or, *pelican*.—^s 2 Kings 21. 13; Lam. 2. 8.—^t Chap. 32. 13; Hosea 9. 6.—^u Chap. 13. 21.

symbols in the Book of Revelation; symbols answering to the real idea of awful retributions which will fall upon sin, sinners, and all sinful agencies in the world's last days. Emblematically the land of Edom becomes a wilderness, and, as an antagonistic kingdom, is destroyed forever.

11, 12. The picture of a solitary, foul, and marshy land, and of disgusting animals and birds, taking complete possession thereof, is a favourite one with Isaiah. (see chapter xiii, 20-22; xiv, 23,) and others copy him. See Zeph. ii, 14. The **cormorant** is possibly the *pelican*, though it be a sea fowl; the **bittern** is, in the opinion of most, the *crane*, or *heron*, though some read *hedgehog*. And this is the condition of the punished Edom. **The line of confusion**—And **he**, or one, stretches a line upon it—an architectural idea denoting exact measurement of justice upon Edom. **Stones of emptiness**, may mean waste stones, desert stones, stones of dark flint, with which the whole desert land there is strewed. These were picked up and used as, or for, a plummet, with the measuring line. So desolate is every thing there that one visiting the region, either in mockery or in mournful seeming, calls out, Where are the once great nobles, or dukes, (Gen. xxxvi, 40,) that ruled here? But no answer. Only the same sad question is mockingly echoed back.

13. The natural consequence of Edom's depopulation follows. In her palaces, and over all her ruined walls of fortresses, there grow up **thorns**,

itation of dragons, and a court for ^o owls.

14 ^o The wild beasts of the desert shall also meet with ⁷ the wild beasts of the island, and the satyr shall cry to his fellow; the ^o screech owl also shall rest there; and the ^o screech owl also shall rest low; and rest for herself a place of rest.

5 Or, *ostriches*. Heb. *daughters of the owl*.
—6 Heb. *Zim*.

nettles, and brambles. Thither also the **wild beasts of the desert** congregate. Wolves, or wild dogs, (not **dragons**,) have their homes there, and the **court**, or grassy plots among the ruins, are resorted to by *ostriches*, (not **owls**.)

14. The desert animals, (*zim*.) *hyenas*, for example, (TRISTRAM'S *Natural History*.) there come in contact with the *howlers*, (*ijim*.) *jackals*, called an **island** creature from its dwelling near the coast, and all inhabited, fertile spots. **The satyr**—Shaggy, fabulous animals, supposed to inhabit desert thickets, and hence called wood devils—objected to by Alexander only because fabulous, but without reason here, for Isaiah employs the term poetically, basing his use of it upon Lev. xvii, 7, "And they shall no more offer their sacrifices unto devils," as the Hebrews had been accustomed to while resident in Egypt. It is the same word in the original, שְׂעִירִים, (*s'irim*.) rendered here "satyr," and, in Leviticus xvii, 7, "devils." The word means the *hairy ones, shaggy animals*. The goat was an object of worship in Egypt, according to Herodotus (ii, 46,) and from the shaggy, rough he-goat, sprang those ideal beings supposed to bear a resemblance to the goat, such as figured in the mythology of Greece at an early period, (when the Egyptian and Grecian religions began to mix,) under the names Pan, Satyr, Selene, etc. Real they doubtless were to the ignorant Israelites when in bondage, but ideal, hateful, and forbidding, both to Moses and Isaiah. No doubt Isaiah gave not the least countenance to them as facts in nature, but poetically used the word to express what was ideally horrible to every mind he addressed. The same is to be said of the **screech owl**,

15 There shall the great owl make her nest, and lay, and hatch, and gather under her shadow: there shall the vultures also be gathered, every one with her mate.

16 Seek ye out of ^a the book of the

7 Hebrew, *Ijim*.—8 Or, *night monster*.—*u* Mal. 3, 16.

or some nightly sounding creature, though many expositors, and Delitzsch among them, favour the meaning of *nocturnal spectres*. The superstitions brought from Egypt lingered with the people of Israel till Monotheism in a large measure expelled them from the popular mind. Nevertheless, later in Jewish history, a crop of legends sprung out of them, and were easily moulded into those of Persian origin; and to this day, with the Arabs, the idea is persistent of still existing devils or *ghuls* and spectres in the desert. The mirages, the exciting air, and the monotony of desert landscapes generally, are very favourable to the persistence of such superstitions. See SPRINGER'S *Leben und Lehre des Mohammed*.

15. **There shall the great owl make her nest**—Bochart regards the rendering here "great owl" as entirely wrong. It is from a word which means to *dart, to spring*, and most interpreters at present join with him in calling the animal an arrow snake, which springs like the rattlesnake. **Lay...hatch...shadow**—This reptile shall make its nest in the ground, or among the ruins, lay eggs, hatch them, and cover its young by its own shadow, or, rather, by its own coiled body. The desert of Sinai, and as far north as Hebron, is full of reptile holes in the ground. **Vultures**—Tristram thinks these not to be what we call vultures, but generally a smaller bird of prey like the kite, possibly also including the buzzard. The desolate ruins of Edom shall make a secure and undisturbed retreat for these dreadful and dreaded creatures; a sad picture of the consequences—not in Edom only, except as a figure, but in all the world—of fighting against God.

16, 17. **Seek ye out of the book**—From the recorded prophecies delivered

LORD, and read: no one of these shall fail, none shall want her mate: for my mouth it hath commanded, and his spirit it hath gathered them. **17** And he hath cast the lot for them, and his hand hath divided it unto them by line: they shall possess it for ever, from generation to generation shall they dwell therein.

v Psa. 78. 55; Acts 13. 19; 17. 26.

by Isaiah from Jehovah many a time heretofore, declaring judgments the like unto this one, **and read, ponder.** Not one of the creatures here alluded to shall **fail**; not one shall "want," nor be without, its **mate**; not one shall miss the other: **for, commanded** by Jehovah, the prophet assuredly believed what he had declared. He also is to write it down, for other prophets after him to attest its truth by observing its fulfilment in the due time. The creatures named shall surely be **gathered** by the breath or command, the providence, of Jehovah, into that doomed land, and the "satyr" and the "screech owl," names used by the prophet for poetic, spectral expression of effect, but which he endorsed not as fact, they too shall be there, fit place for the gathering of devils—as the popular belief would have it—and as a seclusion truly most appropriate for them in point of fact. **He hath cast the lot**—Such an allotment Jehovah has accurately, as by a measuring line, laid out for them. It is their legitimate home for ever.

The desolateness of this so graphically described region is also emblematic of the spiritual desolations that shall yet sweep over all nations, and peoples, and individuals who, like ancient Edom, join themselves in hostilities to the overthrow of the truth and kingdom of God. All these shall fail, never to rise again. But the next chapter—the contrast to this—and the closing part of the prophecy commencing with this, presents an opposite destiny for all who are the friends of God. They pass, as through a dark and sad desert of tribulations, to an entirely new change of scene, when Messiah is fully come, and God's foes are overthrown.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE "wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. **2** It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon; they shall see the glory of

a Chap. 55. 12.—*b* Chap. 32. 15.

CHAPTER XXXV.

1. The wilderness and the solitary place—"The solitary place" spoken of in the previous chapter, but now the home of the wild beasts no longer. See on verse 7. The change is described under the still-used figure of a desert, but a desert now clothed with a luxuriant growth of blooming vegetation. **Shall be glad for them**—Aben Ezra, Fürst, and Delitsch deny that "for them" is a correct reading; they claim the verb to end with a strengthened form only, not with a suffix requiring "for them." This relieves the difficulty as to the meaning. Then it reads, *Desert and waste shall rejoice; desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose*, (or better, *as the narcissus, or crocus, or the anemone*.) Passing north from the Sinaitic range over the blanched and broken, yet generally level, plateau *et-Tih*, one is cheered on reaching the "South Land" by the sight of bulbous plants of the genera *Scilla*—squills, iris, narcissus, etc.—which cover frequent localities from as far south as the travel of a day and a half to Beer-sheba. The anemone blooms beautifully as the travel in March is continued northward, and this, by Tristram, is believed to be the "rose"—the "rose of Sharon."

2. The glorious moral transformation is continued under the figure of extreme physical changes occurring in the desert and parched land. **Shall blossom abundantly . . . rejoice . . . with joy and singing**—The words express the intensified conviction of the prophet that triumphs grand and complete are to come to the friends of Jehovah in place of the powers of evil hitherto ruling. Nor can the rapt mind of the prophet cease its ut-

the Lord, *and* the excellency of our God.

3 "Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. **4** Say to them *that are of a* ¹fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come *with* vengeance, *even* God *with* a recompense; he will come and save you. **5** Then the "eyes of the blind shall be opened, and "the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. **6** Then shall the "lame

^c Job 4. 3, 4; Heb. 12. 12. — ¹ Heb. *hasty*. — ^d Chap. 29. 18; 32. 3, 4; 42. 7; Matt. 9. 27; 11. 5; 12. 22; 20. 30; 21. 14; John 9. 6, 7. — ^e Matthew 11. 5; Mark 7. 31. — ^f Matt. 11. 5; 13. 30; 21. 14; John 5. 8, 9; Acts 3. 2; 8. 7; 14. 8.

terances till it has exhausted its glow of expectation and joy by combining every appropriate object of nature around him into a glorious physical picture. The strong and spreading cedars of **Lebanon**, and the luxuriant plains of **Sharon** and hills of **Carmel**, in the prophet's eye are seen to extend over all that but recently was a waterless waste, gloomy, fearful, terrific. In view of moral changes so great, and so soon to occur, the prophet exhorts the afflicted people of God to bemoan their condition no longer.

3, 4. Strengthen...hands...confirm...knees—The officials of the nation are here addressed. They are to infuse new life into the desponding, and to "strengthen" and "confirm" them by holding up to them the promised hastening blessings. With such prospects, it is no time now for discouragement. It is none other than Jehovah of hosts who is interposing. Vengeance for foes, and recompense for his hitherto suffering ones, are both lodged with him, and he is now coming to exercise both. To the prophet these things seemed not far in the future. The validity of these promises was by him undoubted, though his vision did overleap centuries. His was a present faith.

5, 6. Then—In that glorious future time. **Lame...dumb**—The physical imperfections in these verses are also images of moral disease and infirmity, which in the coming Messianic days are to be removed, as indeed they were removed in Christ's earthly mission, and as they have been and ever will

man leap as a hart, and the "tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall "waters break out, and streams in the desert. **7** And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in "the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be ²grass with reeds and rushes. **8** And a highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; ³the unclean shall not pass over

^g Chapter 32. 4; Matthew 9. 32, 33; 12. 22; 15. 30. — ^h Chapter 41. 18; 43. 19; John 7. 38, 39. — ⁱ Chapter 34. 13. — ² Or, *a court for reeds*, etc. — ³ Chapter 52. 1; Joel 3. 17; Rev. 21. 27.

be in these ends of the world. All nature around us, animate and inanimate, yearns for the deliverance of the sons of God. Romans viii, 19-23.

7. And the parched ground—This means the *mirage*, which shall really become a pool, or lake of water, as to the traveller over the desert it appears. From ten to twelve o'clock every sunshiny day the present writer witnessed, in the month of February, 1870, the phenomenon of the *mirage* in the desert et-Tih, between Sinai and Palestine. It seemed a pool or lake receding with each advancing step of the camels which our party were riding. Wherever it was not level, the hummocks and elevations seemed as islands. The figure of the *sharab*—that is, the *mirage*—is most true to nature. **Grass...reeds...rushes**—That is, all kinds of verdure suitable to such spots, shall exist where now all is blank desolation. Amid miracles like this, by which all nature shall be glorified, the people of Jehovah shall be redeemed.

8-10. And they shall be led home to Zion. **A highway shall be there, and a way**—The one a cast up, well-prepared road, in distinction from the faint camel tracks of the desert, and the other a more general term characterizing the whole thoroughfare. **Way of holiness**—No impure person, either of desert Bedouins or of the unreformed Israelites, shall travel over it. Such will have no desire to do so, for it is a holy way. Only the redeemed will be found thereon, travelling as pilgrims to the better land. **Wayfaring men**—Any

it; ³but it *shall be* for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err *therein*. **9** ¹No lion shall be there, nor *any* ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk *there*:

³ Or, *for he shall be with them.*—¹ Lev. 26. 6; chap. 11. 9; Ezek. 34. 25.

redeemed ones walking this road. **Though fools**—Though ever so humble, ever so wanting in the world's esteem, shall not go astray while on this blessed thoroughfare. **No lion ... there**—On this elevated pathway no beast of prey nor ravenous adversary can harass the joyous traveller. He, unlike the lone desert wanderer, is high and secure above this trouble. Lions abounded in the regions adjacent to Palestine, and the sacred writers often referred to them as objects of dread and alarm. The scene of these glorious times is yet in this world. The Church is militant; yet, under Messianic rule, triumphant. **Redeemed ones ever walk** in this highway "of holiness." After dreary trials and captivities, they shall come out with shoutings, and return to the Lord's courts in Zion with the joy of permanent victoriousness. This joy is in their aspect—**upon their heads**. It lights up the countenance. Possibly the allusion is to the anointing of the head in a time of joy, in contrast with ashes on the head in a time of mourning; or possibly, to the wearing of chaplets on the head in times of festivity. **Sorrow and sighing shall flee away**—The enemies of God shall no more give trouble, they shall be scattered and destroyed; that is, evil shall diminish in power till, in the full coming of the Messiah, at the last days, it shall be no more felt. In this closing prophetic summary all the Gospel promises are included and summed up in that of complete redemption.

In the foregoing portions of prophecy the people of God were seen to be in danger respectively from Syrians, Egyptians, Assyrians, Moabites, Edomites, and Babylonians; and from each and all their deliverance was achieved, and their enemies destroyed

10 And the ^mransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and ⁿsorrow and sighing shall flee away.

^m Chap. 51. 11.—ⁿ Chap. 25. 8; 65. 19; Rev. 7. 17; 21. 4.

as predicted. Now the conclusion is, that *all* God's foes shall ultimately and forever be put to naught. The rule of Messiah shall be universal and eternal; and security and joy shall come upon God's ransomed ones. A close most fitting to this prophetic series.

PART VII.

Prophecies Fulfilled in Hezekiah's Fourteenth Year, and Redemption of the People of Jehovah, chaps. xxxvi-xxxix.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE FIRST ASSYRIAN ATTEMPT TO COMPEL THE SURRENDER OF JERUSALEM, chapters xxxvi, xxxvii.

The first part in the series of Isaiah's visions closed with the preceding chapter, and the next four chapters form an historical appendix to it. They relate chiefly to Sennacherib's invasion and the slaughter of his host; to Hezekiah's sickness and miraculous recovery; and to the friendly intercourse between him and the king of Babylon. Isaiah's authorship cannot justly be questioned. With unimportant additions, the same narrative is found in 2 Kings xviii, 13-xx, 19, which, with fair reasons, may be considered as prepared subsequently to this account in Isaiah. Two reasons, among many others, may be stated. First, the account in this place is marked almost throughout with the prophetic style and additions, and not with the annalistic style; and, second, there is express, though incidental, testimony to this end in 2 Chronicles xxxii, where substantially the same main facts are related; the passage in point is chapter xxxii, 32: "Now the rest of the acts of Hezekiah, and his goodness,

CHAPTER XXXVI.

NOW ^a it came to pass in the fourteenth year of king Hezekiah, that Sennacherib king of Assyria came up against all the defenced cities of Judah, and took them. ² And the king of Assyria sent Rabshakeh from Lachish to Jerusalem unto king Hezekiah with a great army. And he stood by the conduit of the upper pool in the highway of the fuller's field. ³ Then came

^a 2 Kings 18, 13, 17; 2 Chron. 32, 1.—1 Or, secretary.—^b 2 Kings 18, 19.

forth unto him Eliakim, Hilkiah's son, which was over the house, and Shebna the scribe, and Joah, Asaph's son, the recorder.

⁴ And Rabshakeh said unto them, Say ye now to Hezekiah, Thus saith the great king, the king of Assyria, What confidence is this wherein thou trustest? ⁵ I say, sayest thou, (but they are but vain words,) ³ I have counsel and strength for war: now on whom dost

² Heb. a word of lips.—³ Or, but counsel and strength are for the war.

behold they are written in the visions of Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, and in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel."

1. **Now it came to pass**—The parallel passage in 2 Kings is preceded by a summary account of Hezekiah's reforms, the extirpation of idolatry in Judah, and the complete apostasy and consequent capture and deportation of the ten tribes of Israel by Shalmanezzer of Assyria. **In the fourteenth year of king Hezekiah**—Rawlinson (*Monarchies*, ii, 161) asserts a discrepancy of date from the fourteenth (here and in 2 Kings) to the twenty-seventh of the Assyrian Inscriptions. (See SMITH'S *Bible Dictionary*, art. "Sennacherib.") But nothing is more common than mistakes found in Scripture numbers; nor, from the cause (generally that of transcription) of such mistakes, is the matter of them very material. **Sennacherib**—The son of Sargon, and the second king from Shalmanezzer IV. He was among the mightiest of the Assyrian kings. (See George Smith's *Tables in his Assyrian Inscriptions* of 1874, according to which Sennacherib reigned from B. C. 705 to 681—twenty-four years.) **He came up against all the defenced cities of Judah, and took them**—That is, the numerous cities or villages between Lachish and Jerusalem, on the southwest and west of the latter. For the occasion of this, see the comments of Terry in 2 Kings xviii, xix.

2. **Sent Rabshakeh**—In 2 Kings xviii, 17, Tartan and Rabaris are added. These are not personal, but official, names; Rabshakeh means *cup*

bearer. The Jews have a tradition that he was a renegade, or apostate Jew, as he spoke their language. **With a great army**—Probably only a portion of Sennacherib's army. **By the conduit**—The aqueduct of the upper pool—The upper Gihon "pool," just a little northwest of the present Jaffa gate. [See illustrative map on page 158.] This was the place of conference on the terms of the city's capitulation to the Assyrian. **The highway** is still in its old place, passing, as of old, the Gihon pool; and the washing places are also there. Roads in Palestine at present are little better than bridle paths. They have never changed in plan or condition since the Roman occupation of the country.

3. Only the confidential ministers of Hezekiah went out to Rabshakeh at the upper pool. He had been sent from Lachish, a frontier town southwest from Jerusalem, in Judah, in the fruitful hills just above the western plain. A slab from Kouyunjik, now in the British Museum, represents it as a large fortified town. In the case of **Shebna**, see fulfilment of chapter xxii, 19.

4. **The great king**—Sennacherib was so called because he had under him subordinate kings or provinces. Notice Rabshakeh's affected contempt of Hezekiah in withholding his title as king. What hast thou, a pretended king, to confide in? But he puts a royal swell upon thinking of Assyria.

5. And the contempt is kept up through several verses. Instead of the interpretation given in italicized words in this verse, a better meaning of the original is this: "*I, Rabshakeh,*

thou trust, that thou rebellest against me? ■ Lo, thou trustest in the staff of this broken reed, on Egypt; whereon if a man lean, it will go into his hand, and pierce it: so is Pharaoh king of Egypt to all that trust in him. 7 But if thou say to me, We trust in the LORD our God: *is it* not he, whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah hath taken away, and said to Judah and to Jerusalem, Ye shall worship before this altar? 8 Now therefore give pledges, I pray thee, to my master the king of Assyria, and I will give thee two thousand horses,

e Ezekiel 29. 6, 7.

say, *A mere word of lips* [foolish talk] is your counsel and strength for the war which you are vainly urging upon your armed men and followers." The speaker feigns that this counsel and strength is what Egypt has promised.

6. And he in effect continues: "What height of folly in you to trust in this broken reed, Egypt. Leaning on such a staff is only to be pierced by it. Pharaoh has ever proved false to those who have depended on him. He is a reed staff that first pierces, then breaks. His first essays of resistance are daring and sharp, but they soon yield in very weakness." This may have been conceived by this Assyrian leader as about to follow in the invasion soon to be made upon Egypt by Sennacherib.

7. The tantalizer turns now to the claim of a religious reformation on the part of Hezekiah. You trust in Jehovah, you say. But you have taken away his altars and high places, and restricted worship to Jerusalem, thus plundering the people of their broad privileges and liberal religion. The heathenish address is crafty, for it was spoken in Hebrew, and was intended for the people, listening in great crowds from the walls near at hand.

8. "Now try your hand," continues Rabshakeh. **Give pledges**—Hostages, securities, to the great king, for **two thousand horses**, if indeed you can mount such a wonderful number. A contemptuous comparison, yet of keen edge, because cavalry was not an arm the Jews could boast of. The sense of the

if thou be able on thy part to set riders upon them. ■ How then wilt thou turn away the face of one captain of the least of my master's servants, and put thy trust on Egypt for chariots and for horsemen? 10 And am I now come up without the LORD against this land to destroy it? the LORD said unto me, Go up against this land, and destroy it.

11 Then said Eliakim and Shebna and Joah unto Rabshakeh, Speak, I pray thee, unto thy servants in the Syrian language; for we understand it: and speak not to us in the Jews' lan-

4 Or, *hostages*.

phrase "give pledges," is, to make an engagement with, strong and well secured.

9. **How . . . turn away . . . one captain**—How will you, even then, figure in a hand to hand fight with the least one of my satraps or small governors? Which do you think would first take flight? **And put thy trust on Egypt**—Can Egypt come to you with any more glorious rescue with her cavalry?

10. **Am I now come up without the LORD**—The adroitness of Rabshakeh's speech is still manifest. It is to terrify the outside hearers on the walls. To disaffect them, and the whole population of Jerusalem through them, is his entire drift. His last dodge is a religious one. He claims a commission for Sennacherib from Jehovah, the Jews' own deity, to sack and destroy, and thus aims to incite the people to revolt and surrender. Except the better class of Jews, who held to pure Monotheism, all the nations at this time held to the divinity of each other's national gods, which explains Rabshakeh's claim of Jehovah's support.

11-13. **Then said Eliakim . . . Shebna . . . Joah**—The alarm of Hezekiah's officers is now aroused, and they are thrown off their guard. It is singular that they had not seen the trick before. They could understand Aramaic, the language of Rabshakeh, which the hearers on the wall could not. Possibly this dialect was the court language, as the surrounding civil relations required a common language

guage, in the ears of the people that are on the wall. **12** But Rabshakeh said, Hath my master sent me to thy master and to thee to speak these words? *hath he not sent me to the men that sit upon the wall, that they may eat their own dung, and drink their own piss with you?*

13 Then Rabshakeh stood, and cried with a loud voice in the Jews' language, and said, Hear ye the words of the great king, the king of Assyria. **14** Thus saith the king, "Let not Hezekiah deceive you: for he shall not be able to deliver you. **15** Neither let Hezekiah make you trust in the Lord, saying, The Lord will surely deliver us: this city shall not be delivered into the hand of the king of Assyria. **16** Hearken not to Hezekiah: for thus saith the king of Assyria, 'Make an agreement with me by a present, and come out to me: 'and eat ye every one of his vine, and every one of his fig tree, and drink ye every one the waters of his own cistern; **17** Until

I come and take you away to a land like your own land, a land of corn and wine, a land of bread and vineyards. **18** *Be-ware* lest Hezekiah persuade you, saying, The Lord will deliver us. 'Hath any of the gods of the nations delivered his land out of the hand of the king of Assyria? **19** Where are the gods of Hamath and Arphad? where are the gods of Sepharvaim? and have they delivered Samaria out of my hand? **20** Who are they among all the gods of these lands, that have delivered their land out of my hand, that the Lord should deliver Jerusalem out of my hand? **21** But they held their peace, and answered him not a word: for the king's commandment was, saying, Answer him not.

22 Then came Eliakim, the son of Hilkiah, that was over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and Joah, the son of Asaph, the recorder, to Hezekiah with their clothes rent, and told him the words of Rabshakeh.

d 2 Kings 19. 10.—5 Or, Seek my favour by a present. Heb. Make with me a blessing.

e Zechariah 3. 10.—f 2 Kings 18. 33, 35; Daniel 3. 15.

for diplomatic intercourse. **Hath my master sent me to thy master**—The suspected intent is now avowed, and Rabshakeh demonstrates his sole interest with the people by straightening up and speaking louder, after having pictured to them the disgusting results of a prospective siege and famine. The repeated use of the king's name—the **great king, the king of Assyria**—shows to the people his own ambassadorship, and they realize a direct authority in his words. But Hezekiah is contemptuously never mentioned as king. The aim is to inspire in the people a like contempt. In the person of Rabshakeh "the great king" speaks now.

14-18. Special pleading begins here against Hezekiah's influence; also, so far forth, against the people's fealty to Jehovah. Striking down one makes both to fall. **Make an agreement**—He calls upon them to come to pleasant terms with him, to make a blessing, probably a mutual blessing; (so the original;) that is, to leave Hezekiah, ignore his assurances of divine aid and deliverance from the great king's power, choose sustenance from figs and oil and wine and wholesome water, outside the walls, rather than

the revolting extremities of a siege and famine inside. Prepare also to go to a similar land of plenty beyond the great river Euphrates. **Until I come**, means his return from conquering Egypt. He is now at Lachish, subduing that outpost and others lying in the way of his advance upon Egypt. His confidence that he can break Egypt to pieces, like the reeds of her river banks, seems now as strong as his purpose to do so. This accomplished, his purpose is to overthrow the government at Jerusalem and to transport the people, as Israel had been, to Assyria. This device of Rabshakeh is apparently to reconcile the Jews toward this probable result.

19. Where are the gods—Rabshakeh had, in the previous verse, appealed to his success as to the petty northern nations. Their gods failed them, so will Jehovah, the Jews' deity, fail them. For **Hamath, Arphad, and Sepharvaim**, see notes in chapter x, 9. The defeat of Samaria is another argument.

20-22. Rabshakeh continues his impious, Jehovah-defying argument, but to no avail. **They**, the Jews, **held their peace**, according to the instruction of their king Hezekiah. Rabsha-

CHAPTER XXXVII.

AD^a it came to pass, when king Hezekiah heard *it*, that ^bhe rent his clothes, and covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the house of the Lord. **2** And he sent Eliakim, who *was* over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and the elders of the priests, covered with sackcloth, unto Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz. **3** And they said unto him, ^cThus saith Hezekiah, This day *is* a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and of ^dblasphemy: for the children are come to the birth, and *there is*

^a 2 Kings 19. 1.—^b 2 Kings 22. 11; Jonah 3. 6. —^c 2 Kings 19. 3; Psal. 50. 15.

kel's eloquence was spent in vain. The God-fearing Hezekiah had succeeded well in his reformation of the masses. A few worldly or false ones at court had not reformed, and they doubtless had caused the king to fall in with their temporizing policy of securing a promise of help from Egypt. It is fair to believe, with Delitzsch, that the commissioners, on Rabshakeh's turning to the people on the wall, retired at once to Hezekiah, rending their clothes in grief at the disgrace they had experienced.

The second attempt of the Assyrians to force the surrender of Jerusalem begins at chapter xxxvii, 8, and closes the chapter.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

1. When king Hezekiah heard it

—The narrative continues, but the scene is shifted, and what occurs inside the walls of Jerusalem is brought to view. On hearing the report of his returned commissioners, the king Hezekiah acted his grief in the accustomed way—rending his garments and putting on a mourning garb of coarse linen. A deep sorrow is thus expressed; such as, in this extremity, he thought only Jehovah, whom he truly honoured and loved, could assuage. **Went into the house of the Lord**—Where, according to the prayer of Solomon, (1 Kings viii, 29.) sincere prayer should be heard. As this was done publicly, it could not well fail of suitably affecting the people.

2, 3. He sent Eliakim... Shebna

not strength to bring forth. **4** ^aIt may be the Lord thy God will hear the words of Rabshakeh, whom the king of Assyria his master hath sent to reproach the living God, and will reprove the words which the Lord thy God hath heard: wherefore *lift up thy prayer* for the remnant that is ^bleft. **5** So the servants of king Hezekiah came to Isaiah.

6 And Isaiah said unto them, Thus shall ye say unto your master, Thus saith the Lord, Be not afraid of the words that thou hast heard, wherewith the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed

¹ Or, *provocation*.—^d Josh. 11. 12; 2 Sam. 16. 12; Amos 5. 15.—² Heb. *f und*.

—Two of the previous commissioners, together with the elders of the priests, or heads of Levitical families, unto Isaiah, whose sacred teaching, as a great prophet in Jerusalem, was of vast weight with him. The kind of embassy to Isaiah is proof of this. The proof, too, of the king's extreme sense of the need of divine help is the strong metaphor which closes his message to the prophet.

4. It may be—*Peradventure, possibly, perhaps.* **The Lord thy God will hear**—Jehovah will not fail to inflict vengeance on the blasphemy poured on his name this day by Rabshakeh, in behalf of his master, Sennacherib. The king puts this timidly, as though he hardly dared to hope; yet he does, and opens the apocösis of the sentence with a **wherefore, or therefore, lift up thy prayer**, namely, to Heaven. The idea here is, not merely a mental prayer, but one of deep struggle, of importunity and strong utterance. **For the remnant that is left**—Namely, Jerusalem and its people. This city only had been prepared to resist invasion. All the villages round about were open to sack and overthrow.

6, 7. Isaiah replies—He lives closer to God than his king assumes to; this is implied by the king himself in his appeal to him. **Thus saith the Lord**—Direct communion with Jehovah brings to the prophet a revelation favourable to the king's hesitating hope in the case. All the braggadocio of Rabshakeh occasions no fear.

me. ^a Behold, ^e I will ^a send a blast upon him, and he shall hear a rumour, and return to his own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land.

8 So Rabshakeh returned, and found the king of Assyria warring against Libnah: for he had heard that he was departed from Lachish. **9** And he heard say concerning Tirhakah king of Ethiopia. He is come forth to make war with thee. And when he heard *it*, he sent messengers to Hezekiah, saying, **10** Thus shall ye speak to Hezekiah king of Judah, saying, 'Let not thy God, in whom thou trustest, deceive thee, saying, Jerusalem shall not be given into the hand of the king of As-

^e Chap. 10. 16; 2 Kings 7. 6; Job 4. 9.—^a 3 Or, put a spirit into him.—^f 2 Kings 19. 10, 13; Psa. 22. 8; Matt. 27. 43.

Send a blast—Bring a spirit upon him;—some supernatural force that shall influence his thought and plans. **He shall hear a rumour**—Something that shall produce terror, and shall disgracefully scare him homeward, where his career shall end in his being murdered.

8, 9. Seeing no fruit of his commission, Rabshakeh returns to find Sennacherib, for some reason, not now at Lachish but invading Libnah, a city of the plain southwest of Jerusalem. It was assigned originally as a city of refuge and residence of the Levites. See Josh. xxi, 13. Only Rabshakeh is mentioned as going down, probably to report to Sennacherib, while the other officers and the great host, (see chapter xxxvi, 17,) doubtless remained encamped against Jerusalem. **He heard say**—The rumour or report, referred to in verse 7, of powerful preparations made by Tirhakah of Egypt to meet him. Respecting Egyptian monarchs at this time, the perplexities are not yet unravelled. But Tirhakah, one of the three constituting the twenty-fifth dynasty of Manetho, is the principal figure here against Sennacherib. (See RAWLINSON'S *Monarchies*, vol. ii, and GEORGE SMITH'S *Assyrian Inscriptions*, page 311.) On hearing this report, and before Hezekiah should hear of it, and so take advantage to hold out with increased courage, Sennacherib sends back to Hezekiah to surrender, in terms

syria. **11** Behold, thou hast heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all lands by destroying them utterly; and shalt thou be delivered? **12** Have ^e the gods of the nations delivered them which my fathers have destroyed, as Gozan, and Haran, and Rezeph, and the children of Eden which *were* in Telassar? **13** Where *is* the king of ^a Hlammath, and the king of Arphad, and the king of the city of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivah?

14 And Hezekiah received the letter from the hand of the messengers, and read it: ^e and Hezekiah went up unto the house of the Lord, and spread it before the Lord. **15** And Hezekiah prayed unto the Lord, saying, **16** O Lord of

^e Chap. 36. 20.—^f Jer. 49. 23.—^g 1 Kings 8. 28, 30; 2 Chron. 6. 20; Psa. 37. 5; 62. 1, 3; Joel 2. 17, 20.

very like to the first message by Rabshakeh to the people on the wall.

10-13. Sennacherib, in his arrogance and ignorance, again insults the God of Israel by lowering him to the grade of the national gods around, and boasts of the great things his predecessors had done. **Gozan**—Situated on the Chaboras—the river Euphrat of Ezekiel—which flows from the north into the Euphrates. **Haran**—Farther west than "Gozan." From here Abram went to Canaan. **Children of Eden**—If by this is meant the tribe of Eden, (see Ezek. xxvii, 23,) situated on the border of Media, which is not unlikely, then a long curve of territory was made by Sennacherib to denote the extensiveness of Assyrian conquest. Nobody now knows where **Hena** or **Ivah** lay.

14-20. The insulting message above noted was in the form of a **letter**, which Hezekiah piously spread before **the Lord** in the temple—an act of prayer passing at length into vocal utterance, (verses 16-20,) recognising the unity, majesty, and supreme glory of the Infinite One, and asking help for the chosen nation. The argument of his prayer is this: "The Assyrians have certainly destroyed nations and their gods, because these gods were nothing but the work of men's hands. But do Thou help, and show that Thou art the only **Lord** in the universe."

What a prayer! and what an an-

hosts, God of Israel, that dwellest *between* the cherubim, thou *art* the God, *even* thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth: thou hast made heaven and earth. **17** *Incline thine ear, O LORD, and hear; open thine eyes, O LORD, and see: and hear all the words of Sennacherib, which hath sent to reproach the living God. **18** Of a truth, LORD, the kings of Assyria have laid waste all the ⁴nations, and their countries, **19** And have ⁵cast their gods into the fire: for they *were* no gods, but the work of men's hands, wood and stone: therefore they have destroyed them. **20** Now, therefore, O LORD our God, save us from his hand, ¹that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou *art* the LORD, *even* thou only.

21 Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent unto Hezekiah, saying, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Whereas thou hast

* Dan. 9. 18.—⁴ Heb. *lands*.—⁵ Heb. *given*.
—¹ Exod. 9. 15, 16; 1 Sam. 17. 45, 47.—⁶ Heb.
By the hand of thy servants.—⁷ Heb. *the*

swer through Isaiah, Jehovah's true prophet! The prayer had been offered at the most holy place—perhaps in it—unto Him who representatively dwelt between the cherubim by the fact of his glory, or Shechinah, hovering over the mercy seat. The answer was a revelation to Isaiah at his school residence in the city, and brought by one of his disciples to the king. The prayer and the answer have a sublimely official air.*

23. Whom...blasphemed—Not a senseless idol, like the gods you boast of as being superior to Him, as you will soon know to your harm. **Against whom...exalted thy voice**—That is, by Rabshakeh's speaking to the people on the walls, in a loud and confident tone. **Lifted up thine eyes on high**—Descriptive of the haughty

* Because thou hast prayed concerning Sennacherib's daring outrage upon Jehovah's sacred name, this is the answer which he hath returned to thee. **The virgin, the daughter of Zion**—This is Jerusalem, looked at by the prophet, in her always intended and now actually, sacred and pure character as the seat of the true worship of God. **Hath despised thee**—It is absolutely safe from Sennacherib's attacks, and is prepared to defy his ineffectual attempts, also to exult over his own prospective overthrow. "Shaking the head" is possibly a gesture of negation, in effect saying, "He has no power to hurt me."

prayed to me against Sennacherib king of Assyria: **22** This *is* the word which the LORD hath spoken concerning him; The virgin, the daughter of Zion, hath despised thee, *and* laughed thee to scorn; the daughter of Jerusalem hath shaken her head at thee. **23** Whom hast thou reproached and blasphemed? and against whom hast thou exalted *thy* voice, and lifted up thine eyes on high? *even* against the Holy One of Israel. **24** *By thy servants hast thou reproached the LORD, and hast said, By the multitude of my chariots am I come up to the height of the mountains, to the sides of Lebanon; and I will cut down ⁷the tall cedars thereof, *and* the choice fir trees thereof: and I will enter into the height of his border, *and* ⁸the forest of his Carmel. **25** I have digged, and drunk water; and with the sole of my feet have I dried up all the rivers of the ⁹besieged

tallness of the cedars thereof, and the choice of the fir trees thereof.—⁸ Or, *the forest and his fruitful field*.—⁹ Or, *fenced and closed*.

and arrogant air assumed against the living and true God.

24. By thy servants hast thou—Thus Sennacherib is properly held responsible for the insult his servants had given at his command. The reasons seem good which consider **Lebanon**, here, with its accompanying figures, as referring to Jerusalem. The kingdoms above mentioned, with the kingdom of Israel, have all fallen by Assyrian power; now the kingdom of Judah and its capital shall go the same way. So Sennacherib thought and said.

25. Each verse along here shows a *strophical* character—parties speaking in turn. Sennacherib is now the speaker. Yes, indeed, **I have digged, and drunk water; and with the sole of my feet** [steps of my feet] **have I dried up all the streams of Egypt**—The best views respecting the confusion of Hebrew tenses in this verse and the preceding, make good sense as follows: It is as if it were already done, that I have digged and drank water with my great army across the northern et-Tih desert to Egypt. My power is adequate to do it with the utmost ease. Likewise, as if already in Egypt, subduing all before me—it is as good as done—that

places. **26** ¹⁰ Hast thou not heard long ago, *how* I have done it; and of ancient times, that I have formed it? now have I brought it to pass, that thou shouldest be to lay waste defenced cities *into* ruinous heaps. **27** Therefore their inhabitants *were* ¹¹ of small power, they were dismayed and confounded: they were *as* the grass of the field, and *as* the green herb, *as* the grass on the housetops, and *as* corn blasted before it be grown up. **28** But I know thy ¹² abode,

¹⁰ Or, *Hast thou not heard how I have made it long ago, and formed it of ancient times? should I now bring it to be laid waste, and defenced cities to be ruinous*

with the step of foot of my whole army upon water tread mills I have completely exhausted all the Nile arms and canals of Egypt. Some favour is due to another sense, that of an hyperbole, in the last clause, namely, "The Nile was nothing but a puddle to him, which he could trample out with the sole of his foot."—*Delitzsch*.

26. Through the prophet God now speaks to Sennacherib. **Hast thou not heard**—Is it real ignorance on thy part that Jehovah is the only true God, and has control of Assyria; that she is his instrument, the rod of his anger, (chap. x, 5, 15,) to lay waste peoples who submit not to warning and correction? Thou dost boast that it is all by thy command and might, but it is I, who **long ago...have done it.** (Chap. xxii, 11.) Because I so ordered it, the people were of small power before thee. **Of ancient times...I have formed it**—The idea of overruling evil men and their acts is eternal with God. How the Eternal consists with the finite historical, or the absolute with the relative, is doubtless to be forever unknown to men.

27. When, in the order of events, a greatly superior invader comes upon a weak people, the statement that the latter is **of small power**, literally, *short of hand*, unable to reach to an equality of fighting force, is very plain. The comparison, **as...grass of the field...on the housetops...as corn blasted**, etc., under the scorching sun—this adds essential force to the powerlessness of the invaded.

and thy going out, and thy coming in, and thy rage against me. **29** Because thy rage against me, and thy tumult, is come up into mine ears, therefore ^m will I put my hook in thy nose, and my bridle in thy lips, and I will turn thee back by the way by which thou earnest. **30** And ^a *this shall be* a sign unto thee, Ye shall eat *this* year such as groweth of itself; and the second year that which springeth of the same: and in the third year sow ye, and reap, and plant vine-

heaps? as 2 Kings 19. 25.—¹¹ Heb. *short of hand*.—¹² Or, *sitting*.—^m Chapter 30. 28; Ezekiel 38. 4.—ⁿ Exodus 3. 12; 1 Kings 13. 3, 5; 2 Kings 19. 29; 20. 9.

28. The expressions, **thy abode...going out...coming in**, are commonly agreed to mean all the actions of life. Psalm cxxxix, 2. These, Jehovah says to the Assyrian general, he has always known.

29. Because thy rage—Thy violent carrying out of thine own will. This gives the *hithpael* sense of the word—a moving to and fro, an active insolence. **Thy tumult**—Arrogant self-confidence. **Is come up into mine ears**—Denoting good knowledge from hearing. **Hook in thy nose**—The figure of the nose-ring (Ezek. xxxviii, 4) for leading wild, intractable animals, is applied to this untamed man, showing to what humiliations he is to be subjected. The Assyrian is to be led home like a wild beast, without having conquered either Jerusalem or Egypt.

30. The turn of discourse is now to Hezekiah. The main point in it is of a **sign**. **Ye**—Hezekiah and the remnant of the people that shall be left. **Ye shall eat...such as groweth**—The Assyrian depredations have prevented agriculture the last year. All that can be hoped for in the next year is from the spontaneous but scanty harvest derived from grain casually dropped in the previous season. The year following, or third year, the land will be altogether delivered from fear to cultivate to the fullest extent. The invaders will be clean gone, and the ever-to-be-preserved remnant will be here. Another view, possessing considerable weight, is, that this was the year pre-

yards, and eat the fruit thereof. **31** And ¹³the remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah shall again take root downward, and bear fruit upward: **32** For out of Jerusalem shall go forth a remnant, and ¹⁴they that escape out of mount Zion: the ¹⁵zeal of the LORD of hosts shall do this. **33** Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning the king of Assyria, He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with ¹⁶shields, nor cast a bank against it. **34** By the way that he came, by the same shall he return, and shall

¹³ Heb. *the escaping of the house of Judah that remaineth.*—¹⁴ Heb. *the escaping.*

vious to a jubilee, and consequently a sabbatic year. By law the land was to rest, no ploughing or sowing being allowed, consequently no reaping. The same law regulated also the next, or jubilee year. It may not, therefore, have been because of the ravages of the Assyrians, past or present, that the people were to eat, these two years, of such as should grow "of itself." A somewhat curious calculation, confirmatory of the above suggestion, is given by the *Speaker's Commentary*, as follows: "That the year 710 was sabbatical may be seen, 1) By reckoning backward from data supplied by Josephus, who makes the years B. C. 164, 136, 38, to be sabbatical. Now if we add 78+7 (or 546) to 164, we get 710. 2) By reckoning onward from the date of the first occupation of the land, B. C. 1444. For fifteen periods of 7+7 years amount to 735; and B. C. 710 is the 735th year from B. C. 1444. It follows, therefore, that the next year, B. C. 709, was a jubilee year.

31, 32. The remnant—Literally, the *escaped*: the context seems to imply these were few. **House of Judah**—In this invasion of Judah large numbers of the inhabitants perished. Though not mentioned, the pestilence had possibly begun its ravages. The remaining survivors are now to be undisturbed, to flourish and prosper, or, in the words of the prophet, to **take root downward, and bear fruit upward**. This with the proph-

not come into this city, saith the LORD. **35** For I will defend this city to save it for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake. **36** Then the angel of the LORD went forth, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred and fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses.

37 So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh. **38** And it came to pass, as he was worshipping in the house of Nisroch his god, that Adrammelech

^o 2 Kings 19, 31; chap. 9, 7.—¹⁵ Heb. *shield*.—^p 2 Kin. 20, 6; chap. 38, 6.—^q 2 Kin. 19, 35.

remnant is the Messianic kernel. He repeats it with emphasis to assure Hezekiah. **The zeal of the Lord of hosts**—His intense interest in behalf of Judah, will accomplish this. See chapter ix, 7.

33-36. Thus far strongly assuring Hezekiah, Isaiah here gives definite details of the grounds of this assurance. **The king of Assyria... shall not come into this city... nor cast a bank**—A familiar mode of describing an ancient siege. **By the way that he came... shall he return**—Without even an attack on Egypt, though that was the chief point of Sennacherib's intended assault. He shall keep to the thoroughfare on the plains, over the pass of Megiddo, onward northeasterly, etc. This is said in pursuance of God's plan, on that very night, (2 Kings xix, 35,) to smite with death from plague or otherwise, one hundred and eighty-five thousand of this great army. The history of this event is so fragmentary that facts are wanting to decide where, how, in what proportions—whether united in one body again or still separated in parts—this army received this catastrophe.

37, 38. The same lack of facts leaves it uncertain how long Sennacherib survived his mortifying return to Nineveh. The book of Tobit, (i, 21,) Josephus, (*Antiquities*, x, 2, 2,) and Rawlinson, all clash. See RAWLINSON'S *Ancient Monarchies*, vol. ii, page 169, where he claims that Sennacherib lived seventeen years after his return, made other wars, and left his power

and Sharezer his sons smote him with the sword; and they escaped into the land of ¹⁶ Armenia: and Esar-haddon his son reigned in his stead.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

IN *those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. And Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz came unto him, and said unto him, Thus saith the Lord, ^{b1}Set thine house in order: for thou shalt die, and not live. **2** Then Hezekiah turned his face toward the wall, and prayed unto the Lord, **3** And said, ^cRemember

¹⁶ Heb. *Ararat*.—^a 2 Kings 20. 1; 2 Chron. 32. 24.—^b 2 Sam. 17. 23.—¹ Heb. *Give charge concerning thy house*.

and territories undiminished for his son and successor, Esarhaddon. In this case, it must be suspected that some other hand than Isaiah's added these last verses. In any case, the snatches of history furnished by the monuments, as yet only throw the subject into confusion rather than give the light required to explain some facts and apparent dates here presented.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

HEZEKIAH'S ILLNESS.

1. In those days—Probably about the time Sennacherib and his host were providentially routed from out of the land: but see verse 6. **Sick unto death**—With a sickness to all appearances fatal. Some conjecture that the plague which proved so destructive to the Assyrian army was still lingering in the neighbourhood. Such a mortality, necessarily without adequate burial, would taint the whole atmosphere, and produce, at least, sporadic diseases without discrimination over the land. **Set thine house in order: for thou shalt die**—Such was at first the Lord's determination—graciously turned aside by Hezekiah's plea. The command implies, Make due arrangements for thy succession, and whatever else is left incomplete in thy plans. The king was not yet in his prime, being but thirty-nine years old, and had not prepared against an unanticipated death.

2. Turned his face toward the wall—Upon his divan, his bed; and

now, O LORD, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done *that which is good in thy sight*. And Hezekiah wept ² sore.

4 Then came the word of the LORD to Isaiah, saying, **5** Go, and say to Hezekiah, Thus saith the LORD, ^athe God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will add unto thy days fifteen years. **6** And I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria: and ^eI will defend this city. **7** And this

^c Neh. 13. 14.—² Heb. *with great weeping*.—^d 1 Kings 9. 4, 5; 2 Chron. 34. 3; Psa. 89. 3, 4.—^e Chap. 37. 35.

gave himself up to reflection and prayer.

3. Walked before thee in truth—Hezekiah was conscious of entire rectitude. He had broken with idolatry against great odds. His plans were large for the future. To leave them unfinished was a deep grief. Manasseh was yet unborn, (verse 6, and 2 Kings xxi, 1,) and, so far as appears, the king had no lineal heirs.

4, 5. Go...say to Hezekiah—Isaiah lives in holy communion with God. A divine conviction seizes him before he has even crossed the outer entrance of the middle court, as is shown 2 Kings xx, 4, to go back and give a contrary announcement to the king. Hezekiah was duly tested by the announcement that he must die. His grief was not on his own account, but for the peril he foresees to the kingdom. On Isaiah's return Hezekiah was promised an addition of fifteen years to his life.

6. This verse has been taken by some to imply that Hezekiah's sickness was at the beginning of the Assyrian invasion. This seems gratuitous, or assumed without adequate support. See chap xxxix, 1. **I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria**—This is a promise of assured protection from Assyria forever hereafter, as comments further on will show.

7, 8. The corresponding narrative in 2 Kings xx, is more full and circumstantial, for comments on which, see Terry, *Whedon's Commentary*,

shall be 'a sign unto thee from the LORD, that the LORD will do this thing that he hath spoken; 8 Behold, I will bring again the shadow of the degrees, which is gone down in the ³sun dial of Ahaz, ten degrees backward. So the sun returned ten degrees, by which degrees it was gone down.

9 The writing of Hezekiah king of Judah, when he had been sick, and was recovered of his sickness: 10 I said ²in

^f2 Kings 20. 8; chap. 7. 11.—³ Heb. *degrees* *du, or, with the sun.*

2 Kings xx, 1, etc. **A sign**—A token of the truth of Isaiah's prediction of lengthened life. This "sign" was the backward movement of the shadow on the dial, or degrees, or steps of Ahaz. Ahaz borrowed as much as he could from other nations—note his Damascus altar. It is known that astronomy was early cultivated beyond the Euphrates, and that Ahaz, being an idolatrous vassal to Tiglath-pileser, adopted at Jerusalem the eastern altars on the roof of his house for the adoration of the sun and the stars. A blameless result of all this was the measuring of time by the degrees, or advancing steps, of the sun on the dial, which may have consisted of a column or obelisk placed on the top of a terrace, so casting a shadow upon steps or stairs *מַעְלוֹת* (*ma'aloth*) as-

cending on either side, as to mark spaces of time. Several devices are given by Terry (WHEDON'S *Commentary* on 2 Kings xx, 11,) to whose excellent comments the reader is referred.

9. **The writing of Hezekiah**—A psalm celebrating God's goodness in restoring him to health. By some it is supposed to be Isaiah's composition for the king. The latter, however, was a writer of proverbs; (see Prov. xxv, 1;) several psalms also are supposed to be his; he was a most devout man; why should he not, therefore, be accounted most fit in heart and intellect for authorship of a grateful song like this, on a recovery from what was at first pronounced a fatal sickness?

10, 11. **I said**—In my heart, my

the cutting off of my days, I shall go to the gates of the grave: I am deprived of the residue of my years. 11 I said, I shall not see LORD. *even* the LORD, ^bin the land of the living: I shall behold man no more with the inhabitants of the world. 12 ¹Mine age is departed, and is removed from me as a shepherd's tent: I have cut off like a weaver my life: he will cut me off ⁴with pining sickness: from day *even* to night wilt thou make

^g Job 6. 11; 7. 7; 2 Cor. 1. 9.—^h Psa. 27. 13; 116. 9.—ⁱ Job 7. 6.—⁴ Or, *from the thirum.*

thought. **In the cutting off of my days**—Of all the opinions on these very perplexing words, that seems the best which renders them, *In the meridian. in the high noon, of life*, just as I had attained the summit of my best years. **I shall go to the gates of the grave**—Of sheol, the under world. No more of life here remaining to me. **Shall not see the Lord**—Or, *Jah*, namely, in his working and providence on earth. Shall no more have demonstrations of his power and goodness in this state of being, but shall die and go away among the dead. **With the inhabitants of the world**—The "world" here, (in the Hebrew *חֶדֶל*, *chedel*, the land of stillness, of cessation from activity,) is a state sometimes dreaded even by the good. The import of the whole phrase, then, is, "I, with those in the land of stillness, shall no more see man."

12. **Mine age is departed**—"Age," from *דֹּר*, (*dôr*), which, besides meaning a period, a generation, also means *a dwelling*; so here *body*, the dwelling of the soul. It has this meaning from being round, like a nomad tent. Thus the parallel with next phrase is complete. **Is removed...as a shepherd's tent**—The same idea runs in the words, **I have cut off...cut me off**, etc., as a weaver cuts his threads of warp when he has finished his cloth—has cut the web which fastens to the loom. **From day even to night**—During all the day, life seemed to wane. **Make an end of me**—Finish me, cut off existence; as the weaver loosens the cloth from the loom when it is fully woven.

an end of me. **13** I reckoned till morning, *that*, as a lion, so will he break all my bones: from day *even* to night wilt thou make an end of me. **14** Like a crane or a swallow, so did I chatter: ^kI did mourn as a dove: mine eyes fail *with looking upward*: O LORD, I am oppressed; ^lundertake for me. **15** What shall I say? he hath both spoken unto me, and himself hath done *it*: I shall go softly all my years ¹in the bitterness of my soul. **16** O Lord, by these *things* men live, and in all these *things* is the

^k Chapter 59. 11.—^l Or, *ease* me.—¹ Job 7. 11; 10. 1.—⁶ Or, *on my peace* came great bitterness.—⁷ Hebrew, *thou hast loved my*

13. Night came, but no relief. **Till morning**—The disease wrought hard, like a lion, to **break all my bones**—To kill outright. Then all the following day. **From day...to night**—Pain was so great, so resembling a lion crushing all my bones, that I thought a quick end must be certain.

14. Like a crane or a swallow, so did I chatter—*Mournfully twittering*. So Fürst, decidedly, and Gesenius with wavering views. **I did mourn**—I sorrowed vocally **as a dove** does when it has lost its mate. The attempt here is to indicate the sounds made by him in his extreme pain of body and mind. **Mine eyes fail**—Because weak from constant looking upward for help. In his pain the poor man cried, **I am oppressed**—Overwhelmed. **Undertake for me**—*Be surety for me*. Hezekiah seems not to have surrendered all hope.

15. And hope grew with each hour. **What shall I say**—Perhaps the second announcement of Isaiah comes in here. Despair leaves Hezekiah entirely. He turns to praise. **I shall go softly**—This probably means, I will humbly pass the rest of my life. Submission to God shall mark my days in the future.

16. By these...men live—God's virtual promise in the preceding verse is referred to. In consequence of this, "men live," and in them shall my life be. Thou hast ordained to recover me, and cause me still to live.

17. Behold—Hezekiah here challenges attention to an important fact,

life of my spirit: so wilt thou recover me, and make me to live. **17** Behold, ⁶for peace I had great bitterness; but ⁷thou hast in love to my soul *delivered it* from the pit of corruption: for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back. **18** For ^mthe grave cannot praise thee, death cannot celebrate thee: they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth. **19** The living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I *do* this day: ⁿthe father to the children shall make known thy truth. **20** The Lord *was ready* to save me: therefore

soul from the pit.—^m Psalm 6. 5; 30. 9; 83. 11; 115. 17; Ecclesiastes 9. 10.—ⁿ Deuteronomy 4. 9; 6. 7; Psalm 78. 3, 4.

namely, In place of my former healthful, peaceful life, I came to have extreme anguish. But God has saved me from the dreaded sheol, the **pit of corruption**, as it was held by the ancients in its first intention. With all Hezekiah's rectitude he yet was sinful, and this was his chastisement, meant, however, for his good; and it bringing its appropriate results, no longer were his sins remembered.

18. The grave cannot praise thee—The idea of sheol, above mentioned, is here recognised. See Psalm vi, 5; xxx, 9; lxxxviii, 11, 12. The removal of this sad idea was effected only by the progressive history of salvation. There was, indeed, beyond this, a vague belief of a future state, ever growing more receptive of strength and vividness, till, by Christianity, "life and immortality" were brought fully to light. But Hezekiah's age saw principally the dark, natural images of the future state, which fact explains the words of this verse.

19. The living, the living—Intensive of those who were conceived as alone able to render active praises to God. One generation of the living to another, was the order in which those of old held that praise to God could be continued. Does this give the clew to Hezekiah's ground for great mental agitation during his sickness? (He had then no children, if Manasseh was his firstborn.) This granted, we see his anguish to have been because of his pious interest for the religious future of the kingdom.

20. The Lord was ready to save

we will sing my songs to the stringed instruments all the days of our life in the house of the Lord. **21** For ^o Isaiah had said, Let them take a lump of figs, and lay it for a plaster upon the boil, and he shall recover. **22** ^p Hezekiah also had said, What is the sign that I shall go up to the house of the Lord?

o 2 Kin. 21. 7. — *p* 2 Kin. 20. 8. — *a* 2 Kin. 20. 12.

me—Did not delay when the king's moral condition of submission was to all obvious. The king proposes a public rejoicing—praises set to music on **stringed instruments**, (see chapter v, 12,) to be given in the temple.

21, 22. For Isaiah had said—Introduced thus, these verses give the occasion for the previous song of gratitude. But their proper place is between the sixth and seventh verses, and they are so arranged in the corresponding narrative in 2 Kings xx. **A lump of figs**—A cake of bruised figs to be applied to the ulcer. **Boil**—From a word implying heated, inflamed; thus quite likely denoting the disease to have been the remains of the pestilence in the land. This kind of plaster was not known, or is said to be not now known, as an efficacious remedy; but it was ordered and it did its work. **Hezekiah also had said**—An additional reason for composing the above song of praise. **What is the sign**—The sign of a divine interference in the use of natural agencies, effecting a most remarkable change of the apparent course of the sun on the dial of Ahaz. What is its import? That I shall go up to the house of the Lord? Communion with God the first thought and design of the prolonged life.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

BABYLONISH CAPTIVITY THREATENED.

1. At that time—Soon after the recovery of Hezekiah; for Merodach-baladan, governor or king of Babylon, had heard that Hezekiah had been sick and was now recovered. Much difficulty exists as to the time of this message. The most natural meaning of the biblical account of the time, is, that it was a short time after the complete rout of Sennacherib's army. The

CHAPTER XXXIX.

At ^a that time Merodach-baladan, the son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent letters and a present to Hezekiah: for he had heard that he had been sick, and was recovered. **2** ^b And Hezekiah was glad of them, and showed them the house of his ¹ precious things, the silver,

b 2 Chron. 32. 31. — *1* Or, *spicery*.

invasion of Sennacherib was in the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah's reign. Chap. xxxvi, 1. The expression, "at that time," therefore, as the Scriptural account runs, means probably but a few years after the destruction of the Assyrian army, and but a few years before the end of Hezekiah's reign, which was about 698 B. C., a sufficient time at least for the replenishment of his treasures, (2 Chron. xxxii, 23,) with which he had before purchased peace of Sennacherib in his first invasion. 2 Kings xviii, 15, 16. This view of chronology is, according to Josephus and Jerome, and the fragments of Berosus in Eusebius's *Chronicle*, so far as that chronicle relates to the case of Merodach-baladan. The name of Merodach-baladan is located by both the *Assyrian Inscriptions* and the Canon of Ptolemy between 721 and 709 B. C.; and Polyhistor gives him a short reign as king of Babylon, in 702 B. C. (See *Dictionary of the Bible*.) These authorities all concur with the biblical indefinite date at that time, and make the period of Hezekiah's sickness to come easily after the Assyrian army had departed. Rawlinson's dates (*Monarchies*, vol. ii) are against this by many years, but the conclusion results from insufficient determinations in respect to the history as yet furnished in the Inscriptions.

2. Showed them the house of his precious things—Hezekiah was flattered by an embassy from so great a distance as Babylon: he showed them all he had of treasure, armour, spicery, beaten oil, and all the wealth he had collected at Jerusalem. He had prospered greatly since his sickness, perhaps he had greatly enriched himself from the valuable plunder left in the sudden retreat of the Assyrian

and the gold, and the spices, and the precious ointment, and all the house of his armour, and all that was found in his treasures: there was nothing in his house, nor in all his dominion, that Hezekiah showed them not.

3 Then came Isaiah the prophet unto king Hezekiah, and said unto him, What said these men? and from whence came they unto thee? And Hezekiah said, They are come from a far country unto me, even from Babylon. 4 Then said he, What have they seen in thine house? And Hezekiah answered, All that is in mine house have they seen: there is nothing among my treasures that I have

not showed them. 5 Then said Isaiah to Hezekiah, Hear the word of the Lord of hosts: Behold, the days come, that all that is in thine house, and *that which thy fathers have laid up in store* until this day, shall be carried to Babylon: nothing shall be left, saith the Lord. 7 And of thy sons that shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take away; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon. 8 Then said Hezekiah to Isaiah, Good is the word of the Lord which thou hast spoken. He said moreover, For there shall be peace and truth in my days.

2 Or, *jewels*. Heb. *vessels*, or, *instruments*.
—c 2 Sam. 12. 1; 2 Kings 20. 14, 15.

d Joshua 7. 19; Job 31. 33. —e Jer. 20. 5. —
3 Fulfilled, Dan. 1. 2, 3, 7. —f 1 Sam. 3. 18.

army. From numerous resources, at any rate, he was again rich and powerful, and possibly he looked to an alliance with Babylon against the great power which had so annoyed him.

THREATENING OF THE BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY OCCASIONED BY HEZEKIAH, verses 3-8.

3, 4. **Then came Isaiah**—Who was an ethical terror to ill-doing monarchs and their false flatterers. **What said these men**—The answer elicited did not satisfy the faithful prophet, who saw through the guise of the king's flattered, perhaps wily, heart. Good as Hezekiah was, prosperity had elated and beguiled him. On the questions being pressed, however, he candidly told all, and submitted meekly to whatever should follow.

5, 6. **Hear the word of the Lord**—The prophet's soul was surcharged now with a coming of *explicit, definite affliction* upon his own people. The king's imprudence was, for the first time, the occasion of such an utterance. Babylon now rises to his view as the next great engulfing power against the nation. **Behold, the days come**—Days of captivity. In one hundred and twenty years they did come. **All that is in thine house**—Which Hezekiah had himself gathered since he was plundered by Sennacherib. **And that which thy fathers have laid up in store**—Possibly of this Sennacherib got nothing. Was it not in keep-

ing with the prudence of this people to preserve in most secret store large wealth never to be touched but in extreme emergencies? **Shall be carried to Babylon**—But preserved, as a fact of history, (Ezra i, 7,) to be used again in the restored temple at restored Jerusalem. The divine principle, *a remnant shall be saved*, extended to all that pertained to the symbols of the spiritual life of that people. **Nothing shall be left**—The old national life was to expire utterly, to be resurrected in the spiritual remnant.

7. **Of thy sons**—Descendants. The king was childless till three years after his recovery, when Manasseh was born. "He wept sore," (chapter xxxviii, 7,) most probably because he was childless. God gave him a son, but what a son he proved! **Shall be eunuchs**—Household vassals of oriental royalty: a retribution for the sins, not of Hezekiah, most probably, but of Manasseh and later descendants.

8. **Good is the word of the Lord**—Noble submission! Hezekiah was the purest and best royal character since King David, and he had his reward, for his own days were ended in peace.

This chapter is an appropriate historic close, preparatory to the dying song of the great, but now old, prophet of the glorious Messianic times in the far future.

THE LATER PROPHECIES OF ISAIAH.

CHAPTERS XL-LXVI.

CHAPTER XL.

INTRODUCTORY, xl-xli.

We enter now upon the division of Isaiah's prophecies usually called his Later Prophecies, about which many questions have arisen—the chief ones being whether Isaiah or some later though unknown prophet was the author, and whether this collection was written and delivered in Isaiah's last days, or in or near the time of the Babylonian exile. In both questions the former alternative is, in these comments, deemed the true one, while it is admitted that much honest criticism assumes the latter as true, and not the first—solely on critical grounds. These grounds will receive more or less attention in the course of the following comments: but we notice here chiefly the affirmative side of the question, namely, that they constitute the last memorials of Isaiah's teaching; a section by itself, written in his last years, when, saddened, possibly at the failure of Hezekiah's best efforts at reform, and seeing the nation, despite all effort to the contrary, sinking at the opening reign of the child Manasseh into a hopeless idolatry, he turned aside from the sickening sight of human sacrifices offered to devils, and wholly gave, as often before he had partially given, himself up to the view of the glorious times of a certainly coming Messiah.

It is certain that in the New Testament throughout, Isaiah is accounted the author of this section of these prophecies. The writers of the Gospels are witnesses to this fact: see John the Baptist's witness referring to Isaiah xl, 3, as given Matt. iii, 3, and our Lord's testimony, referring to Isaiah xlii, 1-5, at Matt. xii, 18-24. St. Luke, in his Gospel, records the opening of our Lord's ministry in the synagogue at Nazareth, (Luke iv, 18,) when he says, referring to Isaiah lxi, 1-4, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me," etc. Again, John bears his witness, when, in xii, 37-41, he quotes Isaiah's language,

(liii, 1, etc.,) when he says, "Who hath believed our report," etc. It is said of Philip the evangelist, (Acts viii, 26,) that he finds the Ethiopian eunuch reading "Esaias the prophet," at Isa. liii, 7, 8, when the eunuch asks, "Of whom is the prophet speaking?" etc. St. Paul, also, refers (Romans x, 15) to Isaiah as author of these chapters. Isaiah x, 16, and lxi, 1, 2, are pointedly ascribed by Paul to this prophet to confirm a great doctrine of Christianity. Before Isaiah's authorship of these chapters can be impugned, the testimony of the Gospels, the Acts, and the Epistles must also be impugned, together with Isaiah xl-lxvi. Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Philip the Evangelist, the angel of the Lord to Philip, and St. Paul, nay, our Lord himself, and the Holy Ghost, are liable to the charge of having made mistakes together, for they all bear witness in respect to the genuineness of these chapters as Isaiah's own writings.

Such, too, is the witness of Jesus, the son of Sirach, the writer of the apocryphal Ecclesiasticus, and of Josephus, in his *Jewish Antiquities*, xi, i, 1, 2.

The modern hypothesis, that Isaiah xl-lxvi was written by some unknown, nameless prophet, near the close of the exile in Babylon, is discountenanced by external and internal evidence, positive and negative, and especially by the absence of features which such an origin requires. The prophet or author is wanting; he is called the Great Unknown; the hypothesis furnishes no name or title to this body of prophecies; the date and place of writing is lacking as well as the name or title; the prophetic call or commission is wanting; contemporary persons and names are wanting; the prophetic structure is also wholly absent. Later date is also disproved by the strong assertions of divine foreknowledge respecting the victories of Cyrus, chapters xli, xlii, xlii. The transfer of these predictions to the days of Cyrus himself robs them of their force and plain meaning.

The structure of this body of prophecy is very like to that of the earlier prophecies, and so hints to nothing else than real unity of authorship.—

Birks. This unity is further shown by most fitting consolations of the later to the discouragements of the earlier prophecies. The latter abundantly offsets brilliant promise to revive the hope lost from failures so numerous to be seen in the former. Nevertheless, it may be seen that in the close of the former prophecies hope did not entirely die out. The last six historical chapters of the former series have this closing: "Then said Hezekiah to Isaiah, Good is the word of the Lord which thou hast spoken. He said, moreover, for there shall be peace and truth in my days." Chapter xxxix, 8. Hezekiah, the reformer king, it seems, did not leave the world wholly dispirited. But Isaiah, at his death, retired from all further civil struggle, and in the spirit of the glorious hope still lingering with the unsuccessful and dying Hezekiah, he beautifully and fitly matches this new series of glorious Messianic compositions with the shrill, swan-like, dying cry of the old. More strikingly may this matching of the two series be seen if we regard—as properly we can—the last six chapters of the first as interpolated history, and the real close of the first series to occur at the thirty-fifth chapter. There the point of connexion with the later series is marvellously appropriate. Observe instances as follows of striking correspondence. Chapter xxxv, with chapters xli–xlv, and xlii, 6, 7, 16; chap. xxxv, 5, 6 with xliii, 19, 20; chap. xxxv, 8 with xlii, 16, and xliii, 19; chap. 35, 10 with li, 11, etc. Almost indefinitely may others be added. Not the thirty-fifth chapter alone, but every Messianic passage in the former series of prophecy finds its correspondent Messianic sentiment in the later.

Nothing supernatural is allowed in prophecy by the negative critics: and for this reason the thirty-fifth chapter, alike with chapters xl–lxvi, is by them rejected, as Isaiah's in-

spired foresight or prediction of the far future, is with them utterly discounted. They have no spiritual level higher than the merest earthly sight or seeing. Their criticism is on this plane. Isaiah, as author, is mutilated and in large part rejected on this account. But the canon by which they work—non-supernaturalism—is no rule of judgment for believers in supernaturalism; hence little or no authority and respect can be accorded to results reached simply on that inferior plane. Criticism on other grounds, if not over tortured, may and always will command respect, because criticism, unless aiming at the overthrow of things fundamental, is entitled to a large and free field for the extension of certain knowledge in the earth.

STRUCTURE OF THESE PROPHECIES.

In bodies of prophecy some consideration of structure is advisable. All schemes are to some necessary degree artificial; yet it is clear that a ruling idea, or plan of arrangement, must have been prelaidd, or else have grown in the progress of the writing of the following compositions of prophecy.

It is suitable to adopt here that scheme of structure which is presumably the most simple and nearest to correctness. The scheme of *Birks*, modified from *Delitzsch*, is chosen.

FIRST SECTION, chaps. xl–xlviii.

- | | |
|------------------------|---|
| <i>Preface.</i> | 1. Comfort to Zion, chap. xl. |
| <i>First Trilogy.</i> | 2. Controversy with Heathen, ch. xli–xlii, 16. |
| | 3. Controversy with Israel, chap. xlii, 17–xliv, 5. |
| | 4. Cyrus and Immanuel, chap. xliv, 6–45. |
| <i>Second Trilogy.</i> | 5. Woe on Idols, chap. xlv. |
| | 6. Sentence on Babylon, ch. xlvii. |
| | 7. Rebuke and Warning of Israel, chap. xlviii. |

SECOND SECTION, chaps. xlix–lx.

- | | |
|------------------------|--|
| <i>First Trilogy.</i> | 1. Messiah's Voice to the Heathen, chap. xlix. |
| | 2. Messiah's Voice to Israel, ch. l–lii, 10. |
| | 3. Messiah and the Gospel, chap. lii, 11–15. |
| <i>Second Trilogy.</i> | 4. Woe on Idolaters, ch. lvi, lvii. |
| | 5. Sentence on Formalism, chap. lvii. |
| | 6. Rebuke and Promise to Israel, chap. lix. |
| <i>Peroration.</i> | 7. Zion's Final Glory, chap. lx. |

CHAPTER XL.

COMFORT ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. ² Speak ye ¹ comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her ² warfare is accomplished,

¹ Hebrew, *to the heart*.—² Or, *appointed time*.—*a* Job 42. 10; chap. 61. 7.

THIRD SECTION, chaps. lxi-lxvi.

I. MESSIAH'S WORK OF MERCY AND JUDGMENT, chaps. lxi-lxiii, 6.

1. Messiah's Ministry on Earth, chapter lxi.
2. His Heavenly Intercession, chap. lxii.
3. His Work of Judgment and Redemption, chap. lxiii, 1-6.

II. THE LAST CONTROVERSY WITH ISRAEL, chap. lxiii-lxv, 25.

1. Review of God's Past Mercies, chap. lxiii, 7-19.
2. Israel's Confession and Prayer in Last Days, chap. lxiv.
3. Messiah's Answer of Reproof and Blessing, chap. lxv.

III. THE LAST CONFLICTS AND DELIVERANCES, chap. lxvi.

Section First.

CHAPS. xl-xlvi.

PREFATORY.

CHAPTER XL.

§ 1. COMFORT TO THE FEARFUL IN SION, chap. xl.

In the preceding chapter, verse 6, is a specific prediction of the breaking up of the Jewish nation and of its exile in Babylon; and this prediction, with fairest reasons, is regarded as the text or main theme of the prophecy that follows—a prophecy of promise and consolation.

1. **Comfort ye**—This chapter prophetically opens the scene, as it was laid in Babylon during the exile, of God's coming deliverance to his people. The interminable ring of "a remnant shall be saved," still sounds loud and clear. The voice is to the prophet and his partners and successors,—*"Comfort ye."* The charge to "comfort" is redoubled, denoting no cessation, no letting up, of this duty, for God is in earnest, and his promise means continuance of consolation till the exile is over. **My people**—The humble remnant, who are to be purified wholly of every idolatrous taint, and who shall be worthy of complete deliver-

ance. **Your God**—Emphatic of "your;" because the humbled people are, and shall be accounted worthy to be, his—a people to whom he twice commands to announce a perpetual consolation.

³ **The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness,** ^c Prepare ye the way of the

^b Matthew 3. 3; Mark 1. 3; Luke 3. 4; John 1. 23.—^c Mal. 3. 1.

2. **Speak...comfortably**—That is, carry the message in the tenderest way to the very heart. This is a thrice-told charge, rendering the meaning still more intense. **Jerusalem**—Another name for God's beloved Zion or people. Wherever they are the prophet is to give them cheer. Officially sent of God, he has declared that **her warfare** (נֶגֶף, *tsābā*),—or the

allotted time of her captivity—is accomplished. Here it is service and hardship implied in *exile*, of which God's people have a double suffering, and for which there shall be provided twofold comfort in the form of *pardon*.

Delitzsch calls their trouble "that unsheltered bivouac, as it were, of the people who had been transported into a foreign land, and were living there in bondage, restlessness, and insecurity." See Job vii, 5; xiv, 14; and Dan. x, 1.

No doubt there is a Messianic idea underneath here—that of a gloriously better day at hand; and if allusion is also made, as some think, to a past ritualistic hard life in the word "warfare," above, then the deliverance, by Messiah is the freedom of the Gospel, which thought in the prophet's mind underlies the Babylonian deliverance.

These verses (one and two) open up the subject of the prophecies which now follow to the end of the book, and the two verses are the key words to them all.

3-5. **The voice of him that crieth**—Rather, *A voice crieth*, though the Septuagint and the Vulgate translate as in

LORD, "make straight in the desert a highway for our God. 4 Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: ^eand the crooked shall be made ³straight, and the rough places ⁴plain: 5 And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it. ■ The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? ^fAll flesh is

^d Psa. 68, 4; chap. 49, 11.—^e Chap. 45, 2.—
3 Or, *a straight place*.—4 Or, *a plain place*.
—^f Job 14, 3; Psa. 90.5; 102, 11; 103, 15; James 1, 10; 1 Peter 1, 24.

our version. It is rhetorically suitable to read, "Hark! a crier." So Delitzsch. Who is the crier is not given; nor is it important. More important is what follows. **In the wilderness**—Not unlikely the allusion here is, as if to a voice across the desert five hundred miles from Babylon toward Jerusalem. The scene is dramatic: Jehovah heads a column of exiles returning to Zion, as he did of old when, across from Egypt to Canaan, he conducted Israel. Both are sub-type and type of John the Baptist heralding the great coming One at a stage which completed the then pending preparatory dispensation. **Prepare ye the way**—The meaning, spiritually applied, is clear. "Prepare the roadway (of a custom immemorially far back is this an oriental picture) for the coming retinue of redeemed believers; remove rocks, level up gorges, excavate hills, and straighten crooked courses; Jehovah's glory of victorious leading shall be seen by all." Of this the last of verse 5 is the solemn voucher. For reference of this scene to John the Baptist, see Matt. iii, 3, Mark i, 1, and Luke iii, 4-6. See also remarks at pages 169, 170, showing Isaiah's authorship of this chapter.

6-8. **Cry**—Isaiah again hears a voice crying. Not the same voice. That was the herald's cry. This one belongs to another subject. **He said**—**וְאָמַר**, *v'amar*, is the true pointing

of the text, according to the best authorities, though Lowth, Noyes, the Septuagint, the Vulgate, and a few Hebrew manuscripts read, *And I said*, and this apparently helps the sense of what follows. But it is, too,

grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field: 7 The grass withereth, the flower fadeth; because ^ethe spirit of the LORD bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass. 8 The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but ^hthe word of our God shall stand forever.

9 ^o O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain; ⁶ O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings,

^g Psa. 103, 16.—^h John 12, 34; 1 Pet. 1, 25.—
5 Or, *O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion*, chap. 41, 27; 52, 7.—6 Or, *O thou that tellest good tidings to Jerusalem*.

apparent, on the other hand, that it is the prophet who is here hearing, and the voice seems to be that of God, or of an ideal person in behalf of God, to the prophet, because when the latter asks, **What shall I cry?** the answer is such as to exalt the divine Word above all that is conceivable of man. The answer is, therefore, the theme of the entire passage. He is commanded to proclaim the perishable nature of man and of all flesh, and the imperishable nature of the word of God. Why such a proclamation? Possibly for preparing the way in men's minds to see the absolute nothingness of idols (as shown in chapters following) when compared with the infinite exaltation of the almighty God. But more probably, and more directly, to assure the confidence of men in the reliability of God's word of promise that Zion, or the believing ones in exile, shall surely have the deliverance promised. **The grass withereth, the flower fadeth**—Grass is "all flesh," or *man* in the abstract. Then these predicates of man show him in infinite contrast with God. Man is impotent, limited, perishing: the blast of God's breath upon man is his destruction. Whatever such an infinite One says, therefore, can never fail. His promise of consolation and comfort is sure. This is clearly the sense to verse 9. See Psalm x, 15; Isaiah i, 10, 11; 1 Peter i, 24, 25.

9. **O Zion**—The English Version makes Zion the announcer of the message; in the margin, (backed by nearly all commentators,) Zion is the receiver of it. So the order is in the Hebrew, and so in the Septuagint. **That bringest**—Rather, *thou that*

lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God! **10** Behold, the Lord God will come ⁷with strong hand, and ¹his arm shall rule for him: behold, ⁸his reward is with him, and ⁹his work before him. **11** He shall ¹feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry

⁷ Or, *against the strong*.—*i* Chap. 59. 16. —*k* Chap. 62. 11; Rev. 22. 12. —⁸ Or, *recompense for his work*, chapter 49. 4. —⁹ Chapter 49. 10; Ezekiel 34. 23; 37. 24; John 10. 11; Heb.

receivest. **Good tidings**—To Zion, to Jerusalem. The one speaking is the "voice,"—perhaps in the person of the prophet—hitherto proclaiming comfort to exiled ones, now uttering good news to a voice from the high mountain—an ideal elevation between Babylon and Jerusalem. **Lift up... with strength**—Fearlessly ring out the words. **Behold... God**—Speak to the people to be returned to their native land and native cities in Judah: speak with bold, confident strength of voice: speak with full knowledge of the case—"Behold your God!" Why so speak? Because this watchful, mighty God of Israel does at last restore his remnant people back to Jerusalem. This, indeed: but more than this. Merely for this result the language is too strong. Superadded is the idea of the coming One, the Messiah, whose power to save meek and submissive ones shall be to the end of days! No doubt the outlook takes in unlimited ages. This typical restoration involves victories unnumbered till error and sin are put away, and holiness and truth are forever established; else the terms here used seem strained and extravagant.

10, 11. Behold—Serious attention is again challenged. Amplification of last words in preceding verse. **With strong hand**—The Lord is coming "against the strong," (see margin);—soon his great power shall appear—"hand" is evidently implied, and is in itself the symbol of power: "strong hand" is extra power. "Behold" him and trust in him. He is, as it were, commended here as a trustful and safe leader to his returning people; as himself the Almighty Strongest

them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those ⁹that are with young.

12^m Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in ¹⁰a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance? **13^a** Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being

13. 20; 1 Peter 2. 25; 5. 4; Revelation 7. 17. —⁹ Or, *that give suck*.—*m* Proverbs 30. 4. —¹⁰ Hebrew, *a tierce*.—*n* Job 21. 22; 36. 22, 23; Romans 11. 34; 1 Cor. 2. 16.

One, and will show himself to be such. Adversaries, earthly or spiritual, shall not stand before him. **His reward**—"Reward," taken in a good sense, is freely to be bestowed on his purified ones returning from exile. **His work**—Taken in an evil sense, "his work" is to be exercised in the way of punishing those who antagonize him. Though absolutely strong, and a powerful ruler, he is gentle as a tender shepherd to the weak and dependent of the flock which he is to conduct across the arid wastes to Jerusalem and Zion. **Lambs**—Children. **With young**—Tender women soon to be mothers, or who have lately become such. How beautiful the image!

The theory respecting the turn which the thought now takes (verses 12-26) is that of Nägelsbach, and it is one most easy to approve. It is this: "The exceedingly comforting introduction, (verses 1-11), does not at once cheer up Israel. Doubts arise. Is the Lord in earnest when he promises? and, Can he do it? Shall He that did not uphold us when we stood, lift us up again when we have fallen?" The thought is, God's infinite incomparableness with any other being possible to conceive of; and hence his infinite ability and willingness to do what he promises leave no ground for doubt.

12-14. In the presence and hearing of the Jewish people, the prophet asks, **Who hath measured...meted...comprehended**—The verbs are in the past tense, and the last is better rendered as here written (comprehended) because it, on the whole, expresses not what is physical, as do the other terms employed, but what is spiritual or mental. **Who hath directed**—To

his ¹¹ counsellor hath taught him? **14** With whom took he counsel, and *who* ¹² instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and showed to him the way of ¹³ understanding? **15** Behold, the nations *are* as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing. **16** And Lebanon *is* not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt offering. **17** All nations before him *are* as ^o nothing;

¹¹ Heb. *man of his counsel*.—¹² Heb. *made him understand*.—¹³ Heb. *understandings*.—^o Dan. 4. 35.—^p Psa. 62. 9.—^q Verse 25; chap. 46. 5; Acts 17. 29.

the question respecting God's omnipotence, is one added respecting his omniscience: who, besides himself, can regulate the movements of His will, intellect, boundless power, and matchless wisdom? This general idea runs on, showing God's infinite sufficiency in himself, and how vain human assumptions of being in possible communication with God as his counsellor. This thought is referred to by Paul, (Rom. xi, 34, 1 Cor. ii, 16,) to show in both cases, as here, the inconceivable absurdity of attempting comparison of man with God.

15. The nations are as a drop—So far the omnipotence and omniscience of God:—now his exaltation as governor of the universe. Necessarily, all expressions of God's natural attributes are anthropomorphic, after the limited human way of speaking; and, whatever metaphysicians may say, or attempt to say, Isaiah, the greatest of the prophets intellectually, never attempts to get beyond this. The thought here is, that the great nations of earth are no more a burden resting upon the King of the world than a drop hanging from a bucket is a burden to the man carrying it—no more than the weight in the balances is perceptibly increased by the smallest sand atom that lies upon it. **Isles**—Or fragments of the solid continent on which the heathen world is scattered, are to Him who carries the universe like the smallest dust rising in the air.—*De-litzsch*.

ing; and ^p they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity.

18 To whom then will ye ^a liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto him? **19** ^r The workman melteth a graven image, and the goldsmith spreadeth it over with gold, and casteth silver chains. **20** He that ¹⁴ *is* so impoverished that he hath no oblation chooseth a tree *that* will not rot; he seeketh unto him a cunning workman ^s to prepare a graven image, *that* shall not be moved. **21** ^t Have ye not known? have ye not

^r Chapter 41. 6, 7; 44. 12; Jeremiah 10. 3.—^s Chapter 41. 7; Jeremiah 10. 4.—^t Psalm 19. 1; Acts 14. 17; Romans 1. 19, 20.

16. Lebanon is not sufficient—To express adequate adoration of such a Being, all the "cedars of Lebanon"—the most massive timber to be found in that land—are not "sufficient" for the sacrifices that should be offered. Nor are there animals enough for such sacrifices.

17. All nations... are as nothing—The thought of verse 15 is resumed. In weighing comparisons of such a Being all nations of the earth "are as nothing."

18, 19. To whom... will ye liken God—The conclusion is, the impossibility of adequately conceiving Jehovah's greatness and exaltation. Likeness of him to any thing is beyond any human conception. Hence image representation is a thing in the highest degree absurd. An image! an image of metal! (not wooden as yet, and so cut and carved, as the idea is in English!) the smith casts it; the melter plates it with gold, and forms silver chains for it—a process picture, with the describer as spectator;—this thing to be a **likeness** of the incomprehensible God! So much for the *metal* image.

20. Chooseth a tree—Now for the *wooden* idol, and the most cunning workman sought for graver! See chapter xlv, 14.

21. Such absurdities fit only for the sharpest sarcasm. Have ye not known... heard... from the beginning?—Addressed to those still inclined, among the doubters, to idolatry, and equivalent to saying to them,

heard? hath it not been told you from the beginning? have ye not understood from the foundations of the earth? **22** ¹⁵ *He* is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof *are* as grasshoppers; that "stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in: **23** That bringeth the "princes to nothing; he maketh the judges of the earth as vanity. **24** Yea, they shall not be planted; yea, they shall not be sown; yea, their stock shall not take root in the earth: and he shall also blow upon

¹⁵ Or, *Him that sitteth, etc.*—^u Job 9. 8; Psalm 104. 2; chapter 42. 5; 44. 24; 51. 13; Jeremiah 10. 12.

"Ye know better, and why are you guilty of such consummate folly?" Of the four verbs of this verse, the first two are, in the Hebrew, future, the second two in the past tense. The former imply what is possible, the latter what is fact. Have ye not known and heard, what has always been possible to know from reason and conscience, (Romans i, 19, 20, ii, 13,) that only the infinite God can create worlds? "From the beginning" this has been set before the eyes of all men.

22. He that sitteth—This verse contains the fact that should have been known by all men. It is He alone that is enthroned above the vault of the earth, etc. In the old cosmogony of the Hebrews, the heaven was a circular arch which rested on the waters that surrounded the flat, round (not globular) earth. **Are as grasshoppers**—The comparison is, as the weak locust is to man so is weak man to God. **As a curtain**—In Eastern houses the court is sometimes sheltered from heat by a veil of tent cloth, which may be folded and unfolded at pleasure by means of ropes from one side of the parapet wall to the other, and the image is thus furnished of God's spreading out the veil of the heavens.

23, 24. Princes...judges...vanity—Other predicates are here added respecting God, the ruler of the universe. He annihilates the potentates and judges of the earth when they displease him. In various ways he

them, and they shall wither, and the whirlwind shall take them away as stubble. **25** "To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One. **26** Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these *things*, that bringeth out their host by number: *he calleth them all by names by the greatness of his might, for that *he* is strong in power; not one faileth. **27** Why 'sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, My way is hid from the LORD, and my judgment is passed over from my God?

^v Job 12. 21; Psa. 107. 40.—^w Ver. 18; Deut. 4. 15.—^x Psa. 147. 4.—^y 1 Sam. 12. 22; Psa. 31. 22; Jer. 33. 24.

visits them. They are scarcely planted, (to use the figure of the verse,) scarcely sown, etc., ere the hot eastern blast withers them, and carries them away. The meaning is plain, though the figure is mixed.

25, 26. To whom...shall I be equal—As compared with miserable idols? The prophet calls for answer. To whom, of all they know, will they now compare the great Jehovah? **Saith the Holy One**—A new epithet, perhaps a new attribute, occurs here. Holiness also exalts Jehovah. Job xv, 18. He bids them look into starry space, and challenges creatorship above his own. There is no reply to that challenge from idol worshippers. No one who, besides creating, can know, command, and dispose of all things, is able to be brought forth as competitor with Jehovah. And this Almighty One is likewise the Holy One, the Holy One of Israel. Inference: Let no half-doubter, then, among exiles in Babylon, fear the ability and willingness of such a God to convey and restore his people to Zion.

27. Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel?—Amid such proofs, as above, of the infinite incomparableness of Jehovah, the promiser and comforter, what ground for saying, **My way is hid from the Lord?** To the exiles, long brooding over their afflictions, temptation to fear and doubt was a most easy matter. The long hidings of God's face from them led to assurances and re-

28 Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, *that* the everlasting God, the Lord, the creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? ^a*there is* no searching of his understanding.

29 He giveth power to the faint; and to *them that have* no might he increaseth strength. **30** Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: **31** But they that wait upon the Lord ^a*shall* ¹⁶*renew their* strength; they shall mount up with

^a Psa. 147. 5; Rom. 11. 34. — ^a Psa. 103. 5. —
16 Heb. *change*. — ^a Zech. 2. 13.

assurances through the prophet that Jehovah had not forgotten to be again gracious.

28. Hast thou not known—The words here go on with the same reassuring intent. After the first pair of questions of verse 21, the affirmation is: This eternal, all-perfect God does not tire of the humble suppliant's appeal. **Fainteth not**—To search the depths of his wisdom baffles all effort, but proof is found therein of goodness that fails not.

29. He giveth power—So far from becoming faint himself, as the God of power and wisdom he giveth strength to the fainthearted always.

30, 31. Youths shall faint—Young men chosen for war or other hard service, even, lose all their vigour. **But they that wait upon** (or *for*) **the Lord**, however weak physically. **Shall renew.. strength**—Become spiritually strong. Their *waiting* has the sense of expecting.

In general, the Old Testament gives not the full glory to come, but Isaiah has here caught the view. Starting from the exile condition and deliverance from it through trustful waiting, expecting, he sees spiritual victories under Messiah. Souls rise by faith, like eagles by their pinions. The imagery here is strikingly correspondent to Christian experiences.

CHAPTER XLI.

§ 2. CONTROVERSY WITH HEATHEN, chapters xli-xlii, 16.

God will protect the true Israel till the ends of redemption are accomplished. In the preceding chapter

wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.

CHAPTER XLI.

KEEP ^asilence before me, O islands; and let the people renew *their* strength: let them come near; then let them speak: let us come near together to judgment. **2** Who raised up ¹the righteous *man* ^bfrom the east, called him to his foot, ^c*gave* the nations before

¹ Heb. *righteousness*. — ^b Chap. 46. 11. —
^c Gen. 14. 14; verse 25; chap. 45. 1.

(verses 25-31) he has shown to Israel the absolute impotence of idols, and his own sole greatness and sovereignty. He now calls nations devoted to idolatry to test the virtues of their religion in a fair contest with his claims.

1. Islands—Poetical variation for lands—all maritime lands and countries round about: here, the whole heathen world. It had just transpired, (chap. xl, 31,) that those trusting in Jehovah “shall renew their strength,” etc. The summons now is, to the heathen world also to gather as best they can, and come into controversy with God.

2, 3. Ideally, the parties in controversy are now together and Jehovah opens. **Who raised up the righteous**—The verb is in the prophetic past tense—not as actually past, but actually certain to take place. **Righteous man**—Literally, *righteousness*; but denoting quality, and hence a righteous man, the hero man; undoubtedly referring to Cyrus the Mede; not here and now, but in chapters xlv, 28, xlv, 1, actually so naming him. The argument starts with proof of the divinity of Jehovah in predicting, many years beforehand, that this hero is certain to appear, and on in the argument he twice names his hero Cyrus, who for Israel wrought, though a quasi-heathen, yet wrought under providence in this righteous cause. Observe how the description rushes! Succession of events there is, but so rapid that the time element is scarcely noticeable. Cyrus looms on the horizon for a moment, then disappears. Those who

him, and made *him* rule over kings? he gave *them* as the dust to his sword, and as driven stubble to his bow. **3** He pursued them, and passed *2* safely; even by the way *that* he had not gone with his feet. **4** ^aWho hath wrought and done *it*, calling the generations from the beginning? ^bI the LORD, the ^cfirst, and with the last; ^dI am he. **5** The isles saw *it*, and feared; the ends of the earth were afraid, drew near, and came. **6** ^eThey

helped every one his neighbour; and *every one* said to his brother, ^fBe of good courage. **7** ^gSo the carpenter encouraged the ^hgoldsmith and he that smootheth *with* the hammer ⁱhim that smote the anvil, ^jsaying, It is ready for the soldering; and he fastened it with nails, ^kthat it should not be moved. **8** But thou, Israel, art my servant, Jacob whom I have ^lchosen, the seed of Abraham my ^mfriend. **9** *Thou* whom I have

² Heb. *in peace*.—^d Verse 26; chap. 44. 7; 46. 10.—^e Chap. 43. 10; 44. 6; 48. 12; Rev. 1. 17; 22. 13.—^f Chapter 40. 19; 44. 12.—³ Heb. *Be strong*.—^g Chap. 40. 19.

⁴ Or, *funder*.—⁵ Or, *the smiting*.—⁶ Or, *saying of the soldier*. *It is good*.—^h Chapter 40. 20.—ⁱ Deut. 7. 6; 10. 15; 14. 2; Psal. 135. 4; chap. 43. 1; 44. 1.—^k 2 Chron. 20. 7; Jas. 2. 23.

ignore the supernatural in prophecy, may with as little difficulty recognise Isaiah author here, as some other prophet nearer to, but not at, the event. The laws of Hebrew grammar permit, in lively description, scenes yet actually to occur to be transported in thought to a simultaneous past, (or, as some have it, an ideal present,) as here and often in these chapters. It is now rare to find expositors agreeing with Grotius, Lowth, and others, and with former Jewish commentators, in supposing Abraham, and not Cyrus, to be here meant. The great majority adhere to Cyrus as the intended hero, or the coming one. "The coming one first approaches gradually within the horizon of the prophet's ideal present, and it is only little by little that the prophet becomes more intimately acquainted with a phenomenon which belongs to so distant a future, and has been brought so close to his own eyes. Jehovah has raised the new great hero 'from the east,' (*mimmizrach*.) and, according to verse 25, 'from the north' also. Both of these predictions were fulfilled; for Cyrus was a Persian belonging to the clan of Achæmenes, which stood at the head of the tribe of the Pasargardæ. He was the son of Cambyses, and, according to all ancient accounts, he was connected with the royal house of Media; at any rate, after Astyages was dethroned, he became head and chief of the Medes as well as of the Persians." "Now Media was to the north of Babylonia, and Persia to the east."—*Delitzsch*.

4. Who hath wrought and done

it—That is, hath raised up such a conqueror, and from the beginning, from the far past, has had the fact predicted? With august authority the Lord claims himself as the sole author. **I the Lord, the first, and with the last**—"The first," before any other being existed: "with the last," or to the last, in all the movements of history.

5-7. Some suppose the idolatrous party of the heathen world respond at this point. But it seems more suitable to consider Jehovah's argument not yet ended. **Isles saw it, and feared**—Still speaking, Jehovah says the preceding facts affect heathendom with consternation. Yet the idolaters run to each other with the rallying cry: **Be of good courage**. The prophet puts the case with keenest sarcasm. The craft of idol-makers confusedly appeal to each other to rush up the work; caster, melter, anvil-smiter, solderer, all bustling to finish the idol till it shall be able to stand complete and firm. Such is the picture.

8-10. The sarcasm is now that of silence; the idol does not speak. There is therefore no farce of waiting for a reply, but Jehovah turns his address at once to Israel, who recognises the sole invisible deity in his own Lord Jehovah of Israel. **Thou, Israel, art my servant**—The Lord's address is in terms of affection. The collective body of Israel is God's servant, **chosen** servant, in the person of their ancestor **Abraham**, Jehovah's **friend**, or the one (literally) *loving* Jehovah. Special protection and care over Is-

taken from the ends of the earth, and called thee from the chief men thereof, and said unto thee, *Thou art my servant*; I have chosen thee, and not cast thee away.

10 ¹ Fear thou not; ² for I *am* with thee: be not dismayed; for I *am* thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.

11 Behold, all they that were incensed against thee shall be ³ ashamed and confounded: they shall be as nothing; and ⁴ they that strive with thee shall perish.

12 Thou shalt seek them, and shalt not find them, *even* ⁵ them that contended with thee: ⁶ they that war against thee shall be as nothing, and as a thing of

nought. 13 For I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, ⁷ Fear not; I will help thee.

14 Fear not, thou worm Jacob, *and ye* ⁸ men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel. 15 Behold, ⁹ I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument having ¹⁰ teeth: thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat *them* small, and shalt make the hills as chaff. 16 Thou shalt ¹¹ fan them, and the wind shall carry them away, and the whirlwind shall scatter them: and thou shalt rejoice in the Lord, *and* ¹² shalt glory in the Holy One of Israel. 17 *When* the poor and needy seek water, and *there is none,* ¹³ *and* their tongue faileth for thirst, I the

¹ Ver. 13, 14; chap. 43. 5.—² m Deut. 31. 6, 8. —³ n Exod. 23. 22; chap. 45. 24; 60. 12; Zech. 12. 3.—⁴ Heb. *the men of thy strife*. —⁵ Heb. *the men of thy contention*.

⁶ Heb. *the men of thy war*. —⁷ o Ver. 10. —⁸ 10 Or. *few men*. —⁹ p Mic. 4. 13; 2 Cor. 10. 4, 5. —¹⁰ 11 Heb. *mouths*. —¹¹ q Jer. 51. 2. —¹² r Chap. 45. 25. —¹³ s Judges 15. 18, 19; Psa. 34. 6.

rael along his whole history is here asserted. Selected first from Mesopotamia, then rescued from base slavery in Egypt, now to be delivered from exile in Babylon, the people may well be said to be **taken from the ends of the earth**, the *sides* or *corners* thereof—not from **chief men**, as in our version. From all the places where the lot of Israel has been cast, God has hitherto rescued them, and there can now be no reason for fear, for the **right hand**—the power, in other words, of omnipotence—is underneath to uphold.

11. The tables shall turn. Israel's persecutors hitherto shall come to mortification, and, like their idols, to nothingness. The usual converse Hebrew past tenses here contemplate things yet future as already past.

13. The stated reasons continue for hope, and not doubt; they lie in God's continually encouraging **Fear not**. In all these verses God is the speaker. Time past and time future is always to him *time present*.

14. **Thou worm Jacob**—The term "worm" expresses feebleness, and is applied to give the hint that Israel's predicted deliverance is not to be a thing of their own achievement. **Thy Redeemer**—See Lev. xxv, 25–27. Jehovah is to stand in the relation of near kinsman to Israel, especially to the remnant in Babylon, to pay ransom,

as it were, for their deliverance; a typical conception, somehow, of Him who is to be the coming incarnate Redeemer, the Messiah. Nearly universal is the argument with evangelical interpreters that Jehovah of the Old Testament becomes, "in the fulness of times," the Lord Jesus of the New.

15, 16. **I will make thee a new . . . threshing instrument**—The remnant of Israel, when set free, shall be God's threshing drag-net (see chapter xxviii, 25–29) over opposers and idolaters; a frame of plank shod with rollers, or with stones or iron, here with iron, **having teeth**, sharpened teeth. All this means spiritual might.

Mountains . . . hills—Opposers of fearful purpose and aspect. These are to be ground to powder, reduced to beggarly weakness through the mighty moral power with which the beggarly, weak remnant of Israel is to become endowed. **Thou shalt fan them**—The winnowing and the strong wind are put in contrast with God and his renewed people, as regards the once proud and boastful opposers and oppressors.

17, 18. **Poor and needy**—They of the now exiled ones, under the figure of crossing the desert toward Jerusalem and Zion, emblemizing all the dark desert journeyings which the good of this evil world are often called to take; but in which water, free, abundant, and flowing—the figure of grace and

LORD will hear them, *I* the God of Israel will not forsake them. **18** I will open ^{rivers} in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys: I will make the ^{wilderness} a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water. **19** I will plant in the wilderness the cedar, the shittah tree, and the myrtle, and the oil tree; I will set in the desert the fir tree, and the pine, and the box tree together: **20** ^{That they may see, and know, and consider, and understand together, that the hand of the LORD hath done this, and the Holy One of Israel hath created it.} **21** ¹² Produce your cause, saith the LORD; bring forth your strong reasons,

[†] Chap. 35. 6, 7; 43. 19; 44. 3.—^u Psa. 107. 35.—^v Job 12. 9.—¹² Hebrew, *Cause to come near*.—^w Chapter 45. 21.—¹³ Heb. *set our heart upon them*.

salvation, and all needed alleviations, to wayfaring ones who humbly trust in God—is provided.

19, 20. I will plant in the wilderness—Quite as ample shall be the protection from heat and sunstroke by means of overspreading shade from the trees which God shall plant in the waterless desert: the **cedar**, such as Lebanon grows; the **shittah tree**, or, acacia, which abounds in Arabia's favourite valleys; the **oil tree**, that is, the wild olive; **fir tree**, or the cypress; the **pine**, or, as Gesenius renders it, the durable holm oak; the **box**, a species of cedar, (Gesenius,)—these are to cover the wilderness for the safety and refreshment of God's people. Here is employed Isaiah's accustomed imagery. See chapter xxxv. Here, too, is incidental evidence—from the nature of the trees mentioned—of Isaiah's authorship, though the chapters in the earlier prophecies having resemblance to those in these later prophecies, are, by the negative critics, all alike thrown out. The description, however, is of trees familiar to all in Palestine; scarcely so to any Babylonian resident claimed to be necessarily the author. All these rich provisions are to show the difference there is between trusting in the Holy One of Israel (the other keyword of these chapters) and trusting to lifeless idols.

21. Produce your cause—Jehovah's address is here again to the idolaters. He demands that they do

saith the King of Jacob. **22** ^{Let them bring them forth, and show us what shall happen: let them show the former things, what they *be*, that we may ¹³ consider them, and know the latter end of them; or declare us things for to come.} **23** ^{Show the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods: yea, ⁷ do good, or do evil, that we may be dismayed, and behold *it* together.} **24** Behold, ² ye are ¹⁴ of nothing, and your work ¹⁵ of naught: an abomination is *he that chooseth you*. **25** I have raised up *one* from the north, and he shall come: from the rising of the sun ^a shall he call upon my name: ^b and

^α Chap. 42. 9; 44. 7, 8; 45. 3; John 13. 19.—^γ Jer. 10. 5.—² Psa. 115. 8; ch. 44. 9; 1 Cor. 8. 4.—¹⁴ Or, *worse than nothing*.—¹⁵ Or, *worse than of a viper*.—^a Ezra 1. 2.—^b Ver. 2.

their best in bringing proofs of the power of their so-called gods.

22, 23. Let them . . . show us what shall happen—The main challenge is, as to the power of idols to foretell events. But—either as if disgusted with such a proposition, or as if the false prophets, in their usual way, did attempt to answer by isolated, unintelligible statements, though this is not intimated—the whole thing was at once quashed by the virtual question, “Do ye know any thing at all—past, present, or future?” The conclusion is shown in the next verse.

24. Behold, ye are of nothing—Hebrew, *worse than nothing*. **And your work of naught**—Hebrew, *worse than a viper*. If this be the true reading, they are not only worse than nothing but their work is venomous. Let us leave it so, rather than tinker with the text to make it mean (as Gesenius and others) something else. Idol adherents are venomous in their arts, and so they are **an abomination**.

25. I have raised up one—Jehovah keeps the field as the moulder of history and foreteller of the future. In purpose he has “raised up one” **from the north**. In verse 2 it is “from the east.” Both are true. The joint powers of Media and Persia lay in both directions from Babylon. See notes to verse 2. This makes true God's prediction of Cyrus, who is to come one hundred and fifty years after. **From the rising of the sun**—

he shall come upon princes as *upon* mortar, and as the potter treadeth clay. **26** ^cWho hath declared from the beginning, that we may know? and beforetime, that we may say, *He is righteous?* yea, *there is* none that sheweth, yea, *there is* none that declareth, yea, *there is* none that heareth your words. **27** ^dThe first ^e*shall say* to Zion, Be-

c Chap. 43. 9.—d Verse 4.—e Chap. 40. 9.

That is, from Persia, or even farther east, and may refer, not only to Cyrus, but concretely to the improved heathenism, but still heathen religion, which was to come to Babylon through Cyrus, namely, *Zoroastrianism*, a monotheistic religion, though crudely mixed, yet designed perhaps to play a part in palpably moulding the Hebrew religion in some additional items. (See RAWLINSON'S *Five Great Monarchies*, vol. iv, chap. 6.)

26. Who hath declared from the beginning—The questioned resumed as respects idols. Which of them ever gave a prediction at all? Which of them could even affirm as I, Jehovah, have affirmed of Cyrus? **He is righteous**—A better translation, at least of the thought, is that of Cowles: "Who has declared [any thing] from the beginning, that we may know [it,] and from before the event, and we will say, *Right*. [It is true.] Verily there has been no such revealer, no such publisher; not one who has heard your **words**—that is, real predictions."

27. The first shall say to Zion—This verse is severely difficult. Who, or what is meant by ראשון, *first*? One explanation refers back to verse 4, where "I the Lord, the first" is found, and reads in this verse, "I, the Lord, will say to Zion,"—I, the first and only great Being, am alone competent to make this prediction. **Behold them**—*Behold it*, that is, there it is, namely, the fulfilled prediction. Others, making "the first" the first fruits (as in Septuagint, and Syriac Version) of Zion, consider Cyrus as meant and personified in the word "first," and as such he becomes the fulfilled prediction; he is the evangelist to Jerusalem.

hold, behold them: and I will give to Jerusalem one that bringeth good tidings. **28** ^fFor I beheld, and *there was* no man; even among them, and *there was* no counsellor, that, when I asked of them, could ^ganswer a word. **29** ^hBehold, they are all vanity; their works are nothing: their molten images are wind and confusion.

f Chap. 63. 5.—g Heb. *return*.—h Ver. 24.

Nägelsbach, apparently, adopts this view, and finds some support for it in chap. xlv. 1, where Cyrus is called "the anointed" of Jehovah, that is, the Messiah: not the true Messiah, indeed, yet in an important sense the beginning of the redemption of the restoration of God's people from exile, and so a pre-eminent type of the true Messiah, and civilly the first fruits of the prediction. **I will give to Jerusalem one**—A publisher of good tidings; in other words, an evangelist. See chap. xl. 9.

28, 29. I beheld—All opportunities were given the prophets of idolatry, pagan priests, soothsayers, necromancers, etc., to furnish the first indication of predictive power; but not one ever appeared. **There was no man**—No one among all the pretenders, no idol divinity, could answer a word. **They are all vanity**—*Nothingness*. Idol and his worshippers are utter nothingness! All among them, when they attempt to speak, **are wind and confusion**.

The address is thus rounded off in this last return to the idol priests and prophets with whom it first started. The first part, as some divide it, (verses 1–24,) contains the judicial pleadings; the second part, (verses 25–29,) recapitulates the evidence and the verdict.

CHAPTER XLII.

God's controversy with the heathen world is continued, but in this chapter, to verse sixteen, it is represented as in the higher and last stage. Thus far in the description he has presented in contrast, first his omnipotence, and second his omniscience, of which attributes idol gods have absolutely noth-

CHAPTER XLII.

BEHOLD ^amy servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, *in whom* my soul ^bdelighteth: ^cI have put my Spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. ^dHe shall not cry, nor

^a Chap. 43. 10; 49. 3, 6; 52. 13; 53. 11; Matt. 12. 18-20; Phil. 2. 7.—^b Matthew 3. 17; 17. 5; Eph. 1. 6.

ing, and so are utterly discomfited; lastly, he here shows his almighty love—his goodness and mercy—in the gift of the promised almighty deliverer, the Messiah.

1. **Behold my servant**—Who is meant? Not Israel, as in chap. xli, 8, nor the prophet himself, because what is affirmed of this “servant” transcends what any Old Testament prophet was ever called to, and what any mere man was ever capable of doing. The Targum adds *Messiah* to the words “my servant,” as explanatory of them. And Abarbanel, the Jewish enemy of Christians, says those who interpret otherwise are “smitten with blindness.” To the conception of a transcendent Personality the word must refer, from attributes following, which are applicable only to such a conception; in other words, to the incarnate Redeemer, looming up to the prophet’s eye from the far future. It may be asked what affinity has this word here with the same word in chap. xli, 8, and in chap. xlii, 19, 20, where it seems God’s true Israel is called his “servant.” The answer is, our prophet was of the broadest cast of mind; of loftiest spiritual conceptions withal; and was ever certain of victory crowning truth and righteousness as against idolatry and sin; and the conqueror was ever to be the Messiah, first of the Davidic type of kingly glory and righteousness, (chap. xvii, 12;) then Jehovah and co-workers, namely, the embodied idea of the true Israel as in these chapters, (xli-xlvii;) then the holy seed descended from Abraham, the indestructible germ, in which the continuity of Israel was preserved, culminating in the Christ, as St. Paul interprets in Gal. iii. 16. The one true Israel becomes thus individualized in

lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. 3 A bruised reed shall he not break, and the ¹smoking flax shall he not ²quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth. 4 He shall not fail nor be ³discouraged, till he have

^c Chap. 11. 2; John 3. 34.—1 Or, *dimly burning*.—2 Heb. *quench it*.—3 Hebrew, *broken*.

the person of the future great deliverer, the coming Christ. Delitzsch illustrates by a pyramid, of which the base is Israel as a whole; the central section Israel according to the flesh, but purified, and so the remnant Israel; the apex is the personal Messiah springing out of Israel. God has also his “servants” outside of Israel; of whom, in these chapters, is Cyrus, representing employed agencies from the Gentile world over whom he rules, as do typical Messianic agencies from Israel *in whom* he rules.

2. **He shall not cry**—Here is described Messiah’s work as unobtrusive and unostentatious. He seeks no publicity by crying or shouting for others to give attention to him. If he work, he works in silence; if he suffer, he suffers in silence. See chap. xxxviii, 7; lviii, 4; Matt. vi, 5; xii, 16.

3. **A bruised reed**—In chapter xxxvi, 6, Egypt, impaired by Sargon of Assyria, was called a “broken reed.” Figuratively, the bruised and oppressed in Israel are compassionated by Messiah. **Shall he not break**—He will not bruise it more. His nature is to deal tenderly with all; not to command, but to give help more effective than individuals or peoples can obtain from other quarters. **The smoking flax**—The dimly burning and smoking wick, ready to go out for lack of oil, he trims and replenishes, thus imparting to it efficiency; whatever the exigency, he is at hand mercifully to give aid. **Judgment**—The true religion, with all it involves. **Unto truth**—Unto victory, to the ends of the earth and forever.

4. **He shall not fail**—His work, though unshowy, shall be efficiently done; shall be every-where extended. **Set judgment**—Established his religion. **Isles**—Regions in and around

set judgment in the earth: ^d and the isles shall wait for his law.

5 Thus saith God the Lord, ^e he that created the heavens, and stretched them out; ^f he that spread forth the earth, and that which cometh out of it; ^g he that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein: ^h ⁱ I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and

^d Gen. 49. 10. — ^e Chap. 44. 24; Zech. 12. 1. — ^f Psalm 136. 6. — ^g Acts 17. 25. — ^h Chap. 43. 1. — ⁱ Chap. 49. 8.

the seas; heathendom shall tire of idols, and clamour for Messiah's coming and religion.

In these four verses are predicted attributes and doings which assuredly make out God's "servant" (verse 1) as more than a mere man, and more than Israel collectively.

5-9. The words of Jehovah here are not, as in verses 1-4, so much about as to his "servant." **God the Lord**—יהוה, *Hael Jehovah*. This

phrase is peculiar. It means the Mighty One, the Lord. The great Creator, the Mighty One, proclaims himself also the mighty Redeemer. But why announced just here? (1) To keep still in view the infinite contrast between the only true God and the miserable nothingness of idolatry. (2) To give solidity to the hopes and faith which Israel, and the concentrative idea of Messiah springing out of the true Israel, should have in the work now before Messiah to accomplish. And (3) to show, as the predicates expressing creation, etc., are all participles in the present tense, that God, in creating worlds, does not wind up the machinery, set it agoing, and then retire, but that his omnipotent presence is as needful to preserve as his power had been to create. Heb. i. 3. The language here is simple, phenomenal, and descriptive.

6. I the Lord have called thee in righteousness—"Thee," Messiah. Faithful to my word of promise with Abraham; faithful also to my own intrinsic righteousness. Both are involved in the covenant. **Covenant . . . light**—These are terms equivalent to universal gospel blessings.

will keep thee, ^a and give thee for a covenant of the people, for ^b a light of the Gentiles; **7** ^c To open the blind eyes, to ^d bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in ^e darkness out of the prison house. **8** *I am the Lord*; that ^f is my name: and my ^g glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images. **9** Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new

^a Chap. 49. 6; Luke 2. 32; Acts 13. 47. — ^b Ch. 35. 5. — ^c Chap. 61. 1; Luke 4. 18; 2 Tim. 2. 26; Heb. 2. 14, 15. — ^d Chap. 9. 2. — ^e Chap. 48. 11.

7. To open the blind eyes—That is, to quicken the intellect to discern moral distinctions—the conscience to feel, and the will to bestir itself, in view of them. **To bring out the prisoners**—Deliverance from the prison house of sin was another function. Messianic work is providential work, so-called; ordering, through its moral changes, physical changes. The Gospel and effects are an exemplification of these things every-where.

8. I am the Lord—Rather, Jehovah, the immutable, the incommunicable Name. There is no disjointed chain of thought here. It is Jehovah's right at every step in this dealing to guard well his sovereignty for moral impression on an idolatrous world. Messiah is no rival. He is sharer, rather, in his Father's glory, whose will is, that all men "should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father."

9. The former things—"Former" prophecies, respecting which some suppose earlier predictions are meant. This breaks the continuity of the present course of thought in these chapters, to preserve which the sense must be that the rise of Cyrus is here intended, with the agitation of the nations it is to occasion. The events, though yet future, are prophetically accomplished. As God sees them in historical succession they are essentially past, and the prophet so treats them; since, having once announced them, that they will occur is, in his mind, certain. The **new things** now foretold before visible development, concern the restoration of God's people and the great gospel blessings which are bound up with that event. The simple return is, to what is visible; but springing

things do I declare: before they spring forth I tell you of them. **10** ^p Sing unto the LORD a new song, and his praise from the end of the earth, ^q ye that go down to the sea, and ^r all that is therein; the isles, and the inhabitants thereof. **11** Let the wilderness and the cities thereof lift up *their voice*, the villages *that* Kedar doth inhabit: ^s let the inhabitants of the rock sing, let them shout from the top of the mountains. **12** Let them give glory unto the LORD, and declare his praise in the islands. **13** The

^p Psa. 33. 3; 40. 3; 98. 1.—^q Psa. 107. 23.—^r 3 Heb. *the fulness thereof*.—^s Isaiah 49. 16; Obad. 3.—^t Chap. 31. 4.

out of this are also unseen spiritual effects.

10-13. Sing... a new song—On this marvellous unseen religious development which is to fill the whole earth, God calls for jubilation. The "new things" furnish the impulse for a "new song." This means not only fresh praise but a fresh occasion for it. The whole world of the heathen are summoned to join in it.

Standing on some Palestinian eminence, the prophet's eye sweeps the circle of the earth—lands to the far east, and waters to the west and south. **Ye that go down to the sea**—The Red Sea on the south, and the Mediterranean on the west. **The isles, and the inhabitants thereof**—These take in all the populous western shores; the beautiful *shephelah*, or plains stretching in length from Carmel to the South Land, and in width to the foot hills of the Palestinian range. **The wilderness and the cities thereof**—These are the vast steppes eastward, yet to be ideally more blooming, (chap. xxxv, 1,) and to become hospitable tracts for towns and cities, like oases and great river valleys. **Kedar**—This includes the wild Ishmaelites, and their peaceful civilization is implied.

All these are summoned to lift, with grand good will, their voices in praise of the forthcoming renovation of mankind. The strong imagery of verse 10 indicates that the things predicted are the ultimate sure triumphs of the Gospel in all the earth. God, in his almightiness, pledges it. Time

LORD shall go forth as a mighty man, he shall stir up jealousy like a man of war: he shall cry, ^u yea, roar; he shall ^v prevail against his enemies. **14** I have long time holden my peace; I have been still, and refrained myself: *now* will I cry like a travelling woman; I will destroy and ^w devour at once. **15** I will make waste mountains and hills, and dry up all their herbs; and I will make the rivers islands, and I will dry up the pools. **16** And ^x I will bring the blind by a way *that* they knew not; I will

^u 4 Or, *behave himself mightily*.—^v 5 Heb. *swallow, or, sup up*.—^w Jer. 31. 8, 9; Hos. 2. 14; Luke 1. 78, 79.

is never noted, but all shall come to pass in his own time. Non-infringement of the free human will is the divine principle of action, and this necessitates time on and for the human side. The promise as to extent of renovation has no limit, either in amplitude or completeness.

14. I have long...holden my peace—The tense of the first sentence is preterite; that of the sentences following is future. Alexander's rendering clears the passage of the difficulty: "*I have long been still*, saying, *I will hold my peace, I will restrain myself. But now, like the travelling, (woman,) I will shriek, I will pant and gasp at once.*" The difficulty is in the second member; but if the word *saying* may precede, the difficulty is removed. Seeing sin in idolatrous forms the Lord had patiently borne avenging it, long hoping amendment. But he will forbear no longer. Intense anthropomorphism is used to express the energy of his pent-up wrath against it. Divine judgment in an expressed form, fierce and awful, is legitimate when sinners become utterly incorrigible. Perhaps no language, no conception, can reach the reality of the wrongness of sin against God.

15. Waste mountains and hills—Extreme execution of threats against sinners under figures of utter desolation wrought upon comely landscapes. **Islands**—Dry land as opposed to water.—*Gesenius*.

16. And—Antithetic continuance, equivalent to *but*. The result of ca-

lead them in paths *that* they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things [■]straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them.

17 They shall be "turned back, they shall be greatly ashamed, that trust in graven images, that say to the molten images, Ye *are* our gods. 18 Hear, ye deaf; and look, ye blind, that ye may

6 Heb. *into straightness*. — *u* Psa. 97. 7; chap. 1. 29; 44. 11; 45. 16.

tastrophes in preceding verse is the redemption of God's people, and of others not incorrigible. **The blind** — Such as have lost spiritual sight through sin are brought to the truth, though not in their own self-prescribed way. Jehovah alone knows the true way, and therein he leads them. This applies, not only to the blinded Gentiles, but also often to him who had been a better-instructed Hebrew.

Sec. 3. GOD'S CONTROVERSY WITH ISRAEL, chap. xlii, 17–xliv, 5.

The controversy with heathendom closed. Its period is from Abraham's call ideally to the last triumph of Messiah. The message is now again to Israel. It began in chap. i, 2, and has been scatteringly resumed ever since.

17. **They shall be turned back** — It is true, many of the heathen will remain blind, but those who are "turned back" to the truth as originally given to all **shall be greatly ashamed**; or, *ashamed with shame*; that is, utterly mortified at their stupidity in ever having worshipped idols.

18. General message. **Hear, ye deaf...look, ye blind** — The thoughts expressed in verses 17–25 are all coherent, though quick leaps are apparent, as is usual with Isaiah under excited emotion. The words "deaf," "blind," imply quite the same moral state. They apply to less instructed Gentiles, but more to the wayward Israelites—both yet confused by the pronounced utter failure of the idol system.

19. **Who is blind, but my servant?**—Gentiles are now out of the account. The "servant" is Israel, still so stupid that Jehovah can scarce-

see. 19 "Who *is* blind, but my servant? or deaf, as my messenger *that* I sent? who *is* blind as *he that is* perfect, and blind as the LORD's servant? 20 Seeing many things, "but thou observest not; opening the ears, but he heareth not. 21 The LORD is well pleased for his righteousness' sake; he will magnify the law, and make *'it* honourable. 22 But this *is* a people robbed

v Chap. 43. 8; Ezek. 12. 2; John 9. 39, 41. — *w* Rom. 2. 21. — 7 Or, him.

ly think of the blindness elsewhere. "What could I have done to my vineyard that I have not done?" Chap. v, 4. Still beloved, but still under discipline, is Israel. Not yet clarified to the degree required in the "servant"—the one embodied, accepted, co-working Israel, who has his highest antitype in the individualized Messiah. See notes on verse 1.

20. **Seeing many things** — Not, therefore, left in entire darkness. **Observest not** — Because neglectful of using his sight. **Opening the ears, but he heareth not** — And this, too, at a time when the "ears" of the deaf heathen are being attent. Israel is thus keenly reprov'd. The prophet's emotions become tumultuous; the proverb recurs: "Having eyes, they see not," etc. The prophet, no doubt, thinks that by this time the great things done for Israel should have made him perfect.

21. This verse shows what those great things are. **For his righteousness' sake** — That is, for the sake of his righteous cause, he will still be propitious to this swerving people. On Mount Sinai he gave the glorious law, the true religion, and he will still keep it so; he will not relax an iota of its claims; he will hold it over men as unremittingly exacting in its claims. The latter clause of this text is misapplied when made to refer directly and dogmatically to the atoning work of Christ. It should be so used only in the most incidentally illustrative way. It is entangled too much in a thicket of words—words, too, of censure—to be of service as a proof-text for such an important doctrine.

22. **But** — Better, *notwithstanding*. **This is a people robbed and**

and spoiled; ^a*they are* all of them snared in holes, and they are hid in prison houses: they are for a prey, and none delivereth; for ^aa spoil, and none saith, Restore. **23** Who among you will give ear to this? *who* will hearken and hear ¹⁰for the time to come? **24** Who gave Jacob for a spoil, and Israel to the robbers? did not the Lord, he against whom we have sinned? for they would not walk in his ways, neither were they obedient unto his law. **25** Therefore he hath poured upon him the fury of his anger, and the strength of battle: ^aand it hath set him on fire round about, ^ryet he knew not; and it burned him, yet he laid it not to heart.

⁸ Or, *in snaring all the young men of them.*
⁹ Heb, *a treading.*—¹⁰ Heb. *for the after time.*—^a 2 Kin. 25. 9.—^r Hos. 7. 9.—^a Ver. 7.

spoiled—They leave the worship of Jehovah; then enemies are sent among them, who unwittingly are God's instruments of chastisement. All this is in glaring contrast with that condition which Jehovah's mercies were intended to produce. **Snared in holes**—Possibly caves, whither, when pursued, fugitives fled. **In prison houses**—Perhaps they were often kept in their own houses by a besieging enemy. **None saith, Restore**—No one who *can* interfere says this; in other words there is no deliverer.

23-25 Who will... give ear to this? Who... hearken—Calvin and Stier explain this clause as a reproachful exclamation; but Birks, with much truth, says: "It is rather a wondering search after the small remnant who will lay the message to heart amidst the general unbelief." **Who gave Jacob for a spoil... did not the Lord?**—Jacob, having splendid opportunities, and using them properly, could have saved himself, but he did not so use them, and has himself wrought the "spoil and the plunder." In retribution the Lord has sent the Chaldean as his instrument. The masses of Israel, down to and even through the Captivity, have suffered **fury of God's anger**. The nation is overturned; temple and city are destroyed; exile and its mortifications are gloomily endured; but these have

CHAPTER XLIII.

BUT now thus saith the Lord ^athat created thee, O Jacob, ^band he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: ^cfor I have redeemed thee, ^dI have called thee by thy name; thou *art* mine. **2** ^eWhen thou passest through the waters, ^f*I will be* with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou ^gwalkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. **3** For *I am* the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour: ^hI gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee. **4** Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved

^b Ver. 21; ch. 44. 2, 21, 24.—^c Chap. 44. 6.—^d Chap. 42. 6; 45. 4.—^e Ps. 66. 12; 91. 3.—^f Deut. 31. 6, 8.—^g Dan. 3. 25, 27.—^h Prov. 11. 8; 21. 18.

been a purifying fire to the remnant few only, while the masses still heed not the desolations thus made upon them as a whole people. In verses 19-25 Israel is still the *servant of Jehovah*, chosen, yet unfaithful to his trust; instructed, yet dark minded; and at best improving but imperfectly the divine lessons given.

CHAPTER XLIII.

1, 2. The prophet returns to his usual consolatory tone. The first verse is inexpressibly tender; so, for the most part, is the entire chapter. **But now**—Hebrew, *and now*. Transition words suiting the change of tone in the address. **Jacob... Israel**—Both names, for poetic variety, intended for the one chosen body of people. **Fear not**—My love for thee, just now shadowed by my displeasure, returns in full power upon me. My work in calling Abraham, in multiplying Jacob, in delivering from Egypt, and in establishing in Canaan, is not to be for naught. See Daniel iii, 17, 27.

3, 4. **I gave**—Prophetic preterit for *I will give*. **Egypt for thy ransom**—Ransom from exile in Babylon through Cyrus. At a later time Cambyeses took Egypt and made her subject, along with Ethiopia and Seba, on the upper Nile. Seba being, according to Josephus, between the Black and the White Nile branches. For the value Jehovah set on his

thee: therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life. **5** Fear not; for I *am* with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west: **6** I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; **7** *Even* every one that is ^kcalled by my name: for ⁱI have created him for my glory, ^mI have formed him; yea, I have made him.

8 "Bring forth the blind people that have eyes, and the deaf that have ears.

■ Let all the nations be gathered to-

¹ Or, *person*.—ⁱ Chap. 41. 10, 14; 44. 2; Jer. 30. 10, 11; 46. 27, 28.—^k Chap. 63. 19; Jas. 2. 7.—^l Psa. 100. 3; chap. 29. 23; John 3. 3, 5; 2 Cor. 5. 17; Eph. 2. 10.—^m Verse 1.

recovered Israel he gave the restoring world-power those peoples who, for deserved judgment, received humiliation. This is simple amplification of meaning to the words, "I have redeemed thee," etc., in verse 1. **Ransom**—An idea from a law of Moses requiring the firstborn to be ransomed. Israel was Jehovah's first-born. "Egypt," rather than others who also became subject, from her connexion with the first slavery of Israel. See Exod. i, 11.

5-7. Fear not—Resumed from verse 1, to add a second reason for Israel's confidence—because God commands restoration from every quarter—from east, west, north, south. Not literal restoration of all the dispersed of Israel to the literal Zion, but a spiritual restoring, shall occur of **every one...called by my name**. Thus explaining why God has **created...formed...made**, Israel. Gentiles are hence intended as included with believing Jews.

8, 9. An excellent view, is that of Lowth's. Opposed to interpreters who follow Vitringa, Lowth supposes the heathen world summoned to a grand convocation to test the claims of Jehovah against idols. The point to decide upon is, that of predictive power, as in chapter xli, 20-24. **Blind people that have eyes...ears**—Such heathen as have improved natural faculties according to the light they have, (Rom. i, 20,) let them be the judges as to whether idols can predict. **Former things**—A phrase not quite clear, but

gether, and let the people be assembled: ^o who among them can declare this, and show us former things? let them bring forth their witnesses, that they may be justified: or let them hear, and say, *It is truth*. **10** ^p Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, ^q and my servant whom I have chosen; that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I *am* he: ^r before me there was ² no God formed, neither shall there be after me. **11** I, *even* I, ^s *am* the Lord; and beside me *there is* no saviour. **12** I have declared, and have saved, and I have showed,

ⁿ Chap. 6. 9; 42. 19; Ezek. 12. 2.—^o Chap. 41. 21, 22, 36.—^p Chap. 44. 8.—^q Chap. 42. 1; 55. 4.—^r Chap. 41. 4; 44. 6.—^s Or, *nothing formed of God*.—^t Chap. 45. 21; Hos. 13. 4.

probably a list of fulfilled predictions. **Let them bring...their witnesses**—Their documents attesting such fulfilment, that they may be verified, or that they may be held veracious. If they have not such, let them hear from testimony or documents from the other side, and confess their own failure.

But why is this subject brought up again, having already occupied two chapters? Because the prophet's soul has not a little fear that tenderness to the supposed obsolete idolatry will be the means of reviving it again. He aspires for the last traces of this old evil to be utterly gone. He aspires for its burial out of sight for ever.

10. Ye—Israelites. **Are**—Or are to be. **My witnesses**—Emphasis on "ye," God had often verified his predictions by the event, and had at numerous times manifested his power by his deliverances. **And my servant**—The sanctified portion of Israel—the chosen ones. These, when called to the stand, give testimony fit to be graven on the eternal rocks for the use of the coming people of God. **I am he**—The Being described in preceding verses—the only Being acquainted with future events.

11-13. The foregoing series of thoughts are here recapitulated with important additions and inferences. **I am the Lord**—Exod. vi: "I am that I am," with, of course, no beginning, no ending. Before him was no god; of course no god will be after him, and no Saviour or deliverer be-

when *there was* no 'strange god among you: "therefore ye *are* my witnesses, saith the LORD, that I *am* God. 13^v Yea, before the day *was* I *am* he; and *there is* none that can deliver out of my hand: I will work, and who shall ³w let it?

14 Thus saith the LORD, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; For your sake I have sent to Babylon, and have brought down all their ⁴nobles, and the Chaldeans, whose cry *is* in the ships. 15 I *am* the LORD, your Holy One, the Creator of Israel, your King. 16 Thus saith the LORD, which ^{*}maketh a way in the sea, and a ^vpath in the mighty

waters; 17 Which ^{*}bringeth forth the chariot and horse, the army and the power; they shall lie down together, they shall not rise: they are extinct, they are quenched as tow.

18 ^aRemember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old. 19 Behold, I will do a ^bnew thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? ^cI will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert. 20 The beast of the field shall honour me, the dragons and the ^dowls: because ^dI give waters in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert, to give drink to

¹ Deut. 32. 16; Psalm 81. 9.—² Chap. 44. 8; ver. 10.—³ Psalm 90. 2; John 8. 58.—⁴ Heb. *turn it back?*—⁵ Job 9. 12; chap. 14. 27.—⁶ Heb. *bars*.—⁷ Exod. 14. 16, 22; Psa. 77. 19; chap. 51. 10.—⁸ Josh. 3. 13, 16.

⁹ Exod. 14. 4-9, 25.—¹⁰ Jer. 16. 14; 23. 7.—¹¹ 2 Cor. 5. 17; Rev. 21. 5.—¹² Exod. 17. 6; Num. 20. 11; Deut. 8. 15; Psalm 78. 16; chapter 35. 6; 41. 18.—¹³ Or, *ostriches*. Heb. *daughters of the owl*.—¹⁴ Chap. 48. 21.

side him. The Jehovah-name ceases in the Old Testament, and the name of Jesus takes its place in the New Testament. To the ancients Jehovah was the ineffable, the unused name; *Adonai*, (Lord,) through sheer reverence, taking its place in pronunciation. Both the Septuagint and the Greek Testament render the name *κύριος*, (Lord,) which is equivalent to Jehovah, and in the New Testament refers for its meaning to the phrase, "The Lord Jesus Christ." The Jews are witnesses that he is Jehovah, and that besides him there is no all-knowing and all-powerful One, and no Saviour.

14, 15. **For your sake**—Many a time the Jews had possessed signal proofs of divine interference in their behalf. In this Babylonian deliverance, Jehovah's character occurs to their minds as more than deliverer from earthly enemies. He is the Holy One who spiritually redeems and saves. **I have sent**—Cyrus and the Medes are instruments sent of God to Babylon; so obviously sent in their behalf that it amounts to a sure token of God's spiritual—not national—purpose in the case. **Brought down all their nobles**—Both verbs, here, are prophetic preterits, implying "nobles" in the sense of foreign merchants living in Babylon for a time—the crowd that naturally gathers at a great emporium. These, with the Chaldeans, become fugitives from the city on the

invasion of an enemy. See chapter xiii. 14. **Whose cry is in the ships**—The rivers and canals at Babylon seem to have made the dwellers a maritime people. The cry of sailors conveying away the fleeing people seems referred to.

16, 17. **A way in the sea... a path in the mighty waters**—The Lord is to do here similarly to his doing at the Red Sea, in the exodus. And a similar destruction as at the Red Sea is likely to occur in the case of fleeing ones from Babylon. Then the pursuers were, here the pursued are, destroyed.

18. **Remember ye not**—An exhortation not to "remember" the fleeing dwellers, or that event, marvellous as that was: a more marvellous one is to come.

19-21. **A new thing**—As the former event was common in invasions, sieges, etc., to the unfortunate conquered, the marvel now to be spoken of is the certainly approaching spiritual restoration, not on Jews only, but also on Gentiles. **A way in the wilderness... rivers in the desert**—Certainly the same figures, almost the same language, as in chap. xxv, manifestly used of the great renovation under Messiah, and it seems quite to establish again the same authorship of both compositions. See notes on chap. xxxv. Of this great renovation, to come over all men, the

my people, my chosen. **21** "This people have I formed for myself; they shall show forth my praise.

22 But thou hast not called upon me, O Jacob; but thou 'hast been weary of me, O Israel. **23** "Thou hast not brought me the 'small cattle of thy burnt offerings; neither hast thou honoured me with thy sacrifices. I have not caused thee to serve with an offering, nor wearied thee with incense. **24** Thou

hast bought me no sweet cane with money, neither hast thou 'filled me with the fat of thy sacrifices: but thou hast made me to serve with thy sins, thou hast 'wearied me with thine iniquities. **25** I, *even* I, am he that 'blotteth out thy transgressions 'for mine own sake, 'and will not remember thy sins. **26** Put me in remembrance: let us plead together: declare thou, that thou mayest be justified. **27** Thy first father hath

^e Psalm 102. 18; verses 1, 7; Luke 1. 74, 75; Eph. 1. 5, 6.—^f Mal. 1. 13.—^g Amos 5. 25.—^h 6 Heb. *lambs*, or, *kids*.—ⁱ Heb. *made me drunk*, or, *abundantly moistened*.

^h Chapter 1. 14; Malachi 2. 17.—ⁱ Chapter 44. 22; 48. 9; Jeremiah 50. 20; Acts 3. 19.—^k Ezekiel 36. 22, etc.—^l Chapter 1. 18; Jeremiah 31. 34.

literal restoration from Babylon, is the type. **This people...formed for myself**—Probably the exiles from Babylon prefigure here the whole spiritual Israel of the coming Messianic ages. It was a great thing that the exiles were so far spiritually restored as never afterward to relapse into their old idolatry; and that which this prefigured was "the new thing" of verse 19. A glorious fruitage awaits the budding of Messianic germs which the changed wilderness is showing. One thinks of Luke xix, 40: "If these should hold their peace, the stones would cry out." When Messiah shall reign as king and judge, all things will "show forth Jehovah's praise."

22-24. Sweet cane—A "reed of fragrance," from which perfuming extracts and ointments are made; used also in costly offerings. It is said "sweet cane" is not to be found in Syria. Gainsaying this, I quote from my journal of route from Sinai to Hebron, date March 6, 1870: "Found to-day, sixteen hours from Beersheba, in Wady El Abriad, moist from recent rains, a very fragrant reed, resembling *Andropogon calamus*, but the genus and species of which are unknown. These stalks were three feet high, of last year's growth, and very fragrant."

The tenor of these verses does not hold well with the preceding. The writer falls back to describing Jacob in another character than that which fits him for immediate restoration. How could this have been written by

an unknown prophet at the end of the exile? But it tallies completely with Isaiah, through all these prophecies. From one subject to another he often leaps to the reader's surprise. Then there is another difficulty for anti-supernaturalistic critics. The pious Jews were forbidden to offer sacrifices elsewhere than at Jerusalem. No remedy for the critics but to mutilate, as usual, the passage, and consign it to another origin. Yet this need not be done. The break here in Isaiah's style of address, is in this wise explainable: His spirit had glowed in view of the grand Messianic outcome which the literal deliverance from exile suggested. But he at once be-thought himself how unworthy, even yet, they were for so great a mercy, and he reminded them of it to show how great a gratuity they were to share, and how low in humiliation they needed to be. Failure of proper devotion to the temple was made an illustration of Israel's habit of unfaithfulness.

25. I...am he that blotteth out thy transgressions—Love outweighs wrath still. Not for their merit, but for his own sake, he forgives. The lesson is: Be this a reminder of your unworthiness.

26. Put me in remembrance—If this be not so—if you are innocent—bring forth proofs of it. Omniscient inspection reduces Israel's unworthiness to a presumably finer point than Israel himself can see or is willing to confess. This may be presumed from the tone of what follows.

sinned, and thy ^steachers have transgressed against me. **28** Therefore ^mI have profaned the ^vprinces of the sanctuary, ⁿand have given Jacob to the curse, and Israel to reproaches.

CHAPTER XLIV.

YET now hear, ^aO Jacob my servant; and Israel, whom I have chosen: **2** Thus saith the Lord that made thee, ^band formed thee from the womb, *which*

⁸ Heb. *interpreters*. Mal. 2. 7, 8.—^m Chap. 47. 5; Lam. 2. 2, 6, 7.—ⁿ Or, *holy princes*.—^a Psalm 79. 4; Jer. 24. 9; Daniel 9. 11; Zech. 8. 13.

27. Not so worthy after all, (so seems the answer,) though coming from honourable ancestry. **Thy first father...sinned**—Probably Abraham is meant; his sin was in the matter of Pharaoh and of Abimelech. Descent from him cannot screen you. **Thy teachers**—Some think this means nothing except to sustain poetic parallelism: but the passage is probably meant to show that even such leaders, prophets, and priests as were made great account of by the nation, were stained with sin.

28. Therefore I have profaned—Have esteemed less than sacred. **The princes of the sanctuary**—Because of the stains upon them. Your princes in themselves are of little honour to you. The so-called least sin is my abhorrence. It is such in the gross as sends **Jacob to the curse**. The curse of exile becomes a solemn anathema. **Israel to reproaches**—That is, such as are endured in exile life.

CHAPTER XLIV.

The light of the promise breaks through again in very hopeful form, (verses 1-5.) The prophet is permitted to share Jehovah's ethical emotions quite to the degree possible to a human spirit.

1. **Jacob my servant**—The names Jacob and Israel, both synonymous, are used in these chapters to aid rhetorical effect by parallelism. They originally expressed *psychological* differences: The word Jacob meant a *supplanter*, and was changed to Israel, *prevailer*, when he who bore it wrestled and pre-

will help thee; Fear not, O Jacob, my servant; and thou, ^cJeshurun, whom I have chosen. **3** For I will ^epour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring: **4** And they shall ^espring up *as* among the grass, as willows by the watercourses. **5** One shall say, I *am* the Lord's; and another shall call *himself* by the name of Jacob; and

^a Verse 21; chap. 41. 8; 43. 1; Jer. 30. 10; 46. 27, 28.—^b Chap. 43. 1, 7.—^c Deut. 32. 15.—^d Chap. 35. 7; Joel 2. 28; John 7. 38; Acts 2. 18.—^e Psa. 1. 3; 92. 13, 15; Acts 2. 41, 47.

vailed with God at Mahanaim, (Gen. xxxii, 28,) and was ever afterward "a new man" and a faithful servant.

2. **Fear not**—Notwithstanding so many backslidings, God has intense love for his chosen, and to signify this he applies to them the name **Jeshurun**, which means, "people of my deepest affection."—*Gesenius*. This name, with same meaning, is found in Deut. xxxii, 14; xxxiii, 5, 26. The name implies all that belongs to the designation *elect people*.

3. **Water...thirsty...floods...ground**—Of the two parallelisms here the second explains the first. "Here, the Lord says to the beloved people *why* they need not be afraid. In the judgment that is to consume the fleshly Israel, the spiritual Israel is to remain unharmed."—*Nügelbach*. Abundant water promised in drought symbolizes great spiritual outpourings upon the true Israel, as predicted in the second chapter of Joel. See also chaps. xli, 17, 18; xliii, 18-21. Floods, rivers, streams, waters, and the like, are staple terms with the prophet to illustrate copious outpourings of the Holy Spirit in Messianic times.

4. **They**—Jehovah's spiritual seed, converted Jews and Gentiles. **Spring up as among the grass**—In chap. xl, 6-8, grass was the emblem for perishable mankind. In the midst of a frail human race God's people are to flourish in beauty and abiding strength.

5. When truth and holiness shall prevail among God's people, then shall the latter be in such honour. Gentiles to the far ends of the earth shall vie to come into association with

another shall subscribe *with* his hand unto the LORD, and surname *himself*: by ¹the name of Israel. **6** Thus saith the LORD the King of Israel, ²and his Redeemer the LORD of hosts; ³*I am the first, and I am the last; and besides me there is no God.* **7** And ⁴who, as I, shall call, and shall declare it, and set it in order for me, since I appointed the ancient people; and the things that are coming, and shall come, let them show unto them. **8** Fear ye not, neither be afraid: ⁵have not I told thee from that time, and have declared it? ⁶*ye are even my witnesses.* Is there a God besides me? yea, ⁷*there is no God*; I know not *any*.

^fGal. 6. 16; 1 Pet. 2. 9.—^gVerse 24; chap. 43. 1, 14.—^hChap. 41. 4; 43. 12; Rev. 1. 8, 17; 22. 13.—ⁱChap. 41. 4, 22; 45. 21.—^kChap. 41. 22.—^lChap. 43. 10, 12.—^mDeut. 4. 35, 39; 32. 39; 1 Sam. 2. 2; 2 Sam. 22. 33; chap. 45. 5.

them. The triple parallels of this verse are picturesque; **||**, (*zeh*,) thrice used, *this, this, this*. One shall proclaim his adherence to the Christians; another shall write it; and another shall add *Christian* as his surname.

SEC. 4, (1) CYRUS AND IMMANUEL, chapters xlv, 6–xlv, 23.

1. *The folly of idols*, 6–23.

6. Observe the same attributes are assumed by Christ in Rev. i, 8, 17, and xxii, 13. This mission of the Lord Jesus in its outcome, as the New Testament presents it, is, that he is also Messiah, and that he is king and judge of Messiah's kingdom, the kingdom of all the true Israel, whether of Jews or Gentiles.

7, 8. Who, as I—Who, except God, the King of Israel, is sufficiently all knowing to predict events future, and to declare the time and order of each? **Shall call**—That is, to proclaim openly the event, and to place its occurrence in exact order as it will occur. **For me**—God overrules events, so that in the end they turn to the furtherance of his plans. **Ancient people**—Either, since the first generations from Adam, or since the first covenant made with Abraham. As relates to predictive power, it makes little difference which. **Things that are coming**—Probably referring to the deliverance by Cyrus.

■ ¹They that make a graven image are all of them vanity; and their ²delectable things shall not profit; and they are their own witnesses; ³they see not, nor know; that they may be ashamed. **10** Who hath formed a god, or molten a graven image ⁴that is profitable for nothing? **11** Behold, all his fellows shall be ⁵ashamed; and the workmen, they are of men: let them all be gathered together, let them stand up; ⁶yet they shall fear, and they shall be ashamed together. **12** ⁷The smith ⁸with the tongs both worketh in the coals, and fashioneth it with hammers, and worketh it with the strength of his arms: yea, he is hungry, and his strength fail-

¹ Heb. *rock*. Deut. 32. 4.—² Chap. 41. 21, 29.—³ Heb. *desirable*.—⁴ Psal. 115. 4.—⁵ Jer. 10. 5; Hab. 2. 18.—⁶ Psalm 97. 7; chap. 1. 29; 42. 17; 45. 16.—⁷ Chap. 40. 19; 41. 6; Jer. 10. 3.—⁸ Or, *with an axe*.

Shall come—More remote, so commentators of highest repute; not unlikely Messiah's coming. **Fear ye not**—Ye shall be disappointed in none of these things. **Is there a God** (literally, *a Rock*) **beside me**—An abiding foundation. Promises resting on such a Rock can never fail. **There is no God**—Not, other than me, but, none independent of me. I am the sole eternal Being.

9. They that make...image...vanity—The subject is, heathendom itself can be called and become, like yourselves, my witnesses. They make idols which they know to be *nothing*. **They are their own witnesses**—Or, *Their witnesses are these things*. That is, the heathen are fully aware that dumb idols can testify to absolutely nothing. “Their,” means, these makers and worshippers of idols. “These,” that is, the idols themselves. The folly of idolatry is a mark of fatuity in those engaged in it, and must lead to manifest shame. Not to shame merely, but to alarm also, when they assemble to put their system to the test.

12, 13. Notably, withering sarcasm is presented in these verses. Let the ridiculous farce come out in the translation following, that of Delitzsch: In the workshops, “*The iron smith has a chisel, and works with red-hot coals, and shapes it with hammer, and works it with his powerful arm. He gets hun-*

eth: he drinketh no water, and is faint.

13 The carpenter stretcheth out *his* rule; he marketh it out with a line; he fitteth it with planes, and he maketh it out with the compass, and maketh it after the figure of a man, according to the beauty of a man; that it may remain in the house. **14** He heweth him down cedars, and taketh the cypress and the oak, which he ⁴strengtheneth for himself among the trees of the forest: he planteth an ash, and the rain doth nourish *it*. **15** Then shall it be for a man to burn: for he will take thereof, and warm himself; yea, he kindleth *it*, and baketh bread; yea, he maketh a god, and worshippeth *it*; he maketh it a graven image, and falleth down there-to. **16** He burneth part thereof in the fire; with part thereof he eateth flesh; he roasteth roast, and is satisfied: yea, he warmeth *himself*, and saith, Aha, I am warm, I have seen the fire: **17** And

the residue thereof he maketh a god, *even* his graven image: he falleth down unto it, and worshippeth *it*, and prayeth unto it, and saith, Deliver me; for thou art my God. **18** ⁵They have not known nor understood: for ⁶he hath ⁷shut their eyes, that they cannot see; and their hearts, that they cannot understand. **19** And none ⁸considereth in his heart, neither *is there* knowledge nor understanding to say, I have burned part of it in the fire; yea, also I have baked bread upon the coals thereof; I have roasted flesh, and eaten *it*: and shall I make the residue thereof an abomination? shall I fall down to ⁹the stock of a tree? **20** He feedeth on ashes: ¹⁰a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, *Is there* not a lie in my right hand?

21 Remember these, O Jacob and Israel; for ¹¹thou art my servant: I have formed thee; thou art my servant: O

⁴ Or, *taketh courage*.—⁵ Chap. 45. 20.—⁶ 2 Thess. 2. 11.—⁷ Heb. *daubed*.—⁸ Heb. *setteth to his heart*.—⁹ Chap. 46. 8.

¹⁰ Heb. *that which comes of a tree?*—¹¹ Hos. 4. 12; Romans 1. 21; 2 Thess. 2. 11.—¹² Verses 1, 2.

gry thereby, and his strength fails. *If he drinks no water his strength fails. The carpenter draws the line, marks it with pencil, carries it out with the planes, makes a drawing of it with the compass, and carries it out like the figure of a man, like the beauty of a man, that it may dwell in the house.* Note the points: Great haste to have the idol made quickly. Some emergency. Hunger is neglected, and fainting occurs from thirst. Very eager to expedite the work while the iron is hot. Yet the god gives or allows no relief, except to hunger and thirst. Is such a god of any worth? Then the idol must be like a man—a beautiful man—and its divinity is on the same level.

14-17. Heweth...cedars...cypress...oak—Back of manufacture, the prophet now goes for the origin of idols. He seeks the trees from which they are made—trees which require rains long before they can be made into idols. He seeks the cedar, oak, holm oak. (Why seek trees of Palestine if this prophet is of Babylon at the time of Cyrus, and is not Isaiah one hundred and fifty years before?) The fig tree is used, too, but half of it—its chips—is taken for fuel to cook and warm by. Why such a material for the making

of a god? Delitzsch quotes as follows, *in loco*: “Diagoras of Melos, a pupil of Democritus, once threw a wooden figure of Hercules into the fire, and said jocularly, “Hercules, come now, perform thy thirteenth labour, and help me cook my turnips.” With as keen a point does Isaiah virtually ask: “Is there a god in your cedar, holm, or fig tree logs or billets?”

18-20. The whole system of idol religion, in like manner, is simply foolish. Its votaries embrace it only to be blinded in conscience and reason. The makers and worshippers of idols are alike fools. And the sarcastic prophet cannot lament the dementing effects of the idol system in language more fitting than in the exactly literal words of verses 19 and 20, which sufficiently explain themselves.

21. This sarcasm he turns into admonition of God's people. For them chiefly he has drawn the foregoing picture, and from it he turns to the contrast. **Remember these, O Jacob and Israel**—Note your own condition in comparison. **Thou art my servant**—That is, one co-operating with me in establishing a kingdom of truth and salvation.

Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me.

22 ¹ I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for ² I have redeemed thee. **23** ² Sing, O ye heavens; for the Lord hath done *it*: shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein: for the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel. **24** Thus saith the LORD, ^a thy Redeemer, and ^b he that formed thee from the womb, *I am* the LORD that maketh all *things*; ^c that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself; **25** That ^d frus-

trateth the tokens ^e of the liars, and maketh diviners mad; that turneth wise *men* backward, ^f and maketh their knowledge foolish; **26** ^g That confirmeth the word of his servant, and performeth the counsel of his messengers; that saith to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be inhabited; and to the cities of Judah, Ye shall be built, and I will raise up the ^h decayed places thereof: **27** ⁱ That saith to the deep, Be dry, and I will dry up thy rivers: **28** That saith of Cyrus, *He is my shepherd*, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, *Thou shalt be built*; and to the temple, *Thy foundation shall be laid*.

^a Ch. 43. 25.—^b Ch. 43. 1; 48. 20; 1 Cor. 6. 20; 1 Pet. 1. 18, 19.—^c Psa. 69. 34; 96. 11, 12; chap. 42. 10; Jer. 51. 48; Rev. 18. 20.—^d Chap. 43. 14; ver. 6.—^e Ch. 43. 1.—^f Job 9. 8; Psa. 104. 2; ch.

40. 22; 42. 5; 45. 12; 51. 13.—^g Chap. 47. 13.—^h Jer. 50. 36.—ⁱ 1 Cor. 1. 20.—^j Zech. 1. 6.—^k Heb. *wisdom*.—^l Jer. 50. 38; 51. 32, 36.—^m 2 Chron. 36. 22, 23; Ezra 1. 1; chap. 43. 13.

22. Blotted...clouds...sins—Two-fold figure of clouds obscuring the sun and of sins hiding the face of God. Clouds being removed, the sun, with the clear blue heavens, comes to view; so sins repented of, bring sense of approval from God, revealing the truth, **I have redeemed thee**.

23. Sing...shout...the Lord hath redeemed—Gospel hope is herein so full and assured, and Messianic prospect so grandly cheering, that a chorus of rejoicing is called for from the universe, the heavens, the earth's depths, mountains, and forests. Such signs of victory and superiority—infinity exceptional as to devils and created beings, and nothingnesses of the idol worship—are worthy of shouts through the universe in behalf of the Lord God Almighty and the Redeemer of Israel.

24-28. The remaining verses of the chapter virtually make a single paragraph, unbroken in sense; the sense being a confirmation of the divine promises to Israel—that is, to the Church—by instances cited of God's omnipotence exercised in Israel's peculiar behalf. They are the original forming of Israel by the Maker of all things, who made the heavens, (as well as man,) and phenomenally spread them out; and the earth also. **By myself**—That is, by himself alone. no one being in existence besides him. **Frustrateth the tokens of the liars**—

Putting diviners to flight and shame; but, on the other hand, aiding his servants the prophets to foretell that Jerusalem shall be built, and Zion again occupied. **That saith to the deep, Be dry**—Removeth all barriers to the return, seas and rivers opening dry passages therefor, (referring to Israel's history, first at the Red Sea and the Jordan, and last at the Euphrates,) and who, at last, names the deliverer, **Cyrus**, God's fold-builder for the flock.

CONTINUATION IN REGARD TO CYRUS.

The mention of Cyrus by name at the close (verse 28) of an array of divine titles and perfections is no trivial circumstance—no dim prediction of this personage—one hundred and seventy years before his coming. There is significance in his coming and in his reign at such a time of the greatest importance to the world's civilization. The character of Cyrus is variously drawn in the fragments of the old histories, but in none of them is there any thing otherwise than what, in the hands of divine providence, he could have been with full free will shaped to be a coadjutor of Jehovah—the Lord's **servant**. Prior to his connexion with the Jews he is represented as a great conqueror and organizer, but not wanting in humane and noble feelings toward his subjects—to the Jews especially; who, both as colonists in Palestine and as citizens

CHAPTER XLV.

THUS saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose "right hand I have holden," to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the twoleaved gates;

a Ch. 41. 13. — I Or, *strengthened*. — b Ch.

and residents in the East, adhered patriotically to him amid all attempted revolts.

The liberation from exile was a thing small, indeed, in itself, when compared with the other great events of his reign, yet it ranks with the greatest events as seen in its issues to mankind. Naturally endowed with great special gifts, and these sanctified measurably by the divinity which rules over as well as in men, he was prepared to be thus "the anointed of Jehovah" in the special work of furthering the redemption of mankind.

Speculations as to the name Cyrus, from *Kur* or *Kuru*, (Persian,) and this Hebraized in *Kores*, may be waived; but the ancient references to him may well be noted as to his character. Eschylus (Persæ) says, "He was naturally gentle;" Plutarch and Diodorus preserve traditions greatly favourable. Josephus also. Thus he was eminently fitted to facilitate the progress of the redemptive work of Christ. Melchizedec and Cyrus (both of them Gentiles outside the sacred enclosure from Abraham) were certainly proper to be called types of Christ at points in which they shadowed the Christ-like character. How came Cyrus to so touch at those points? By direct providential ordering leading to his consent to be so fashioned of God. God "raised him up in righteousness." (Chap. xlv, 13.) God chose him "to perform his will in Babylon." (Chap. xlviii, 14.) See also 2 Chr. xxxvi, 22, 23, and first verse in Ezra i. Not unlike Cyrus was in direct communication with Daniel. (So Josephus.) Doubtless Cyrus was not a polytheist. His religion, (if that were Zoroastrianism,) did not allow it as heathenism allows it. It is conceivable that, through Daniel, those chapters in Isaiah were exhibited to Cyrus. Daniel, though

and the gates shall not be shut; 2 I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: "I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron: 3 And I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and

41, 2; Dan. 5. 30. — c Chap. 40. 4. — d Psa. 107. 16.

then, it may be, in his last years, could not but be serviceable and influential with the young conqueror; for Daniel was a sage, a statesman, a tried man as to his own religion, and so far himself also a conqueror.

CHAPTER XLV.

Sec. 4, (2) THE TIMES OF CYRUS AND MESSIAH.

1. This subdivision of section four presents more in detail the relations of Cyrus to Immanuel. **To his anointed, to Cyrus**—Jehovah's "anointed" in the typical aspect of kingship and royal command, relating to Israel in particular. For Israel's sake Cyrus was anointed king. He subdued all nations within and contiguous to Babylon—Medes, Assyrians, Babylonians, Hyrcanians, and the nations of account in Asia Minor. **I will loose the loins of kings**—This means, to weaken, as "to gird up" the loins, means to put strength into one. **To open . . . twoleaved gates**—By which Cyrus entered the city of Babylon. Herodotus speaks of the gate by the river (Euphrates) having been left accidentally unclosed on the night of the attack. To the same effect says Xenophon. (See HERODOTUS i, 191, and XENOPHON'S *Cyrop.*, vii, v, 10.)

2. **Gates of brass**—See preceding verse. The Lord, by his prophet, promises the removal of every barrier. A hundred years later, Herodotus speaks of great Babylon's gates of brass that were destroyed. This helps to confirm Isaiah's knowledge of their existence.

3, 4. **Treasures of darkness**—Perhaps "darkness" is to offset "riches of secret places" in the parallel member. These treasures were to be taken by Cyrus, or given to him in his various conquests. The amount re-

hidden riches of secret places, "that thou mayest know that I, the LORD, which 'call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel. 4 For ^aJacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast ^bnot known me.

5 I ¹am the LORD, and ²there is none else, there is no God besides me: 'I girded thee, though thou hast not known me: 6 ^mThat they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west,

^e Chap. 41. 23.—^fExod. 33. 12, 17; chap. 43. 1; 47. 1.—^gCh. 44. 1.—^h1 Thess. 4. 5.—ⁱDeut. 4. 35, 39; 32. 39; chap. 44. 8; 46. 9.

ceived from Croesus in Lydia alone was said to be one hundred millions sterling. Added to these were all the resources of Babylon, the "exactness of gold." Cyrus was to learn from such prosperity, first, that the Lord fulfilled his promise to the letter; and second, that he was the true God, the God of Israel. He had called Cyrus by name as Israel's redeemer. By this and other facts, Cyrus could not but believe and accept the prophecy as really intended for himself.

5, 6. **I girded thee**—Rather, *I will gird thee*. The Hebrew is future. "Gird thee" means, I will invest thee with royal power and great dignity, a fact that occurred a century and a half later; an evidence of divine prediction that the whole idolatrous world could never gainsay.

7. **I form the light, and...create evil**—Zoroastrianism—the Magian religion—held God to be one and omnipotent, but he was derived from the light principle. The God Jehovah here assumes priority to and creatorship of light. He claims also to be no rival with Ahriman, the evil deity of the East. God himself rejects dualism absolutely. He is the one sole sovereign. "Evil," as it exists in the world, is the result, not of God's direct creation, but of actualized possibility likely to occur in beings free to choose the right or the wrong way; such freedom as is essential to moral responsibility. Jehovah lays down his eternal protest against the old Zend or Persian religion.

8. **Pour down righteousness**—The

that *there is none besides me*. I *am* the LORD, and *there is none else*. 7 I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and ^acreate evil: I the LORD do all these *things*. 8 ^oDrop down, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness: let the earth open, and let them bring forth salvation, and let righteousness spring up together; I the LORD have created it. 9 Woe unto him that striveth with ^phis Maker! *Let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of*

^k Verses 14, 18, 21, 22.—^l Psalm 18, 32, 39.—^m Psa. 102, 15; ch. 37, 20; Mal. 1, 11.—ⁿ Amos 3, 6.—^o Psa. 72, 3; 85, 11.—^p Chap. 64, 8.

first sign of transition from Cyrus to Messiah's days. God has been elaborately revealed as the true God; there is no allowing the idea, moreover, that he is a rival with the conception of a Magian deity born of the light, and a contender, half-and-half, in a system of dualism. Full conviction ought at this stage to have been furnished that he is the one pure, sole Sovereign of the universe, or there is none. And now the prophet goes off in rapture that Jehovah is, still further, the God of all righteousness, which distills like dew and pours like rain upon the face of the earth. The world, too, through divine ordering, is ready to receive righteousness whether in drops or showers. This transition is to Messianic times; and this figure shows provision for salvation to all, whether gradual or more rapid, and copious to all who are ready to take it as freely offered.

9, 10. The Lord chooses Cyrus—an outsider to the covenant—to be his servant and medium for forwarding mankind's redemption, and he is both right and wise in so doing. Yet he knows the temper of his own people to criticise the proceeding, and he thus protests. **Woe unto him**—God's yearning to console is often, in this way, at a break through these chapters. He frequently takes occasion thus to show how absurd for man to **strive with his Maker**—a strong way of putting human preposterousness. See chap. xli, 11. **Potsherd strive with** (or among)...**potsherds**—Let man be compared with nothing

O. T.

the earth. "Shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it, What makest thou? or thy work, He hath no hands? **10** Woe unto him that saith unto his father, What begettest thou? or to the woman, What hast thou brought forth? **11** Thus saith the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, and his Maker, Ask me of things to come concerning my sons, and concerning the work of my hands command ye me. **12** "I have made the earth, and created man upon it: I, even my hands, have stretched out the heavens, and all their host have I commanded. **13** "I have raised him up in righteousness, and I will direct all his ways: he shall build my city, and he shall let go my captives,

^g Chap. 29, 16; Jer. 18, 6; Romans 9, 20.—^r Deut. 27, 16; Mal. 1, 6; Heb. 12, 9.—^s Jer. 31, 9.—^t Chap. 29, 23.—^u Chap. 42, 5; Jer. 27, 5.—^v Gen. 1, 26, 27.—^w Gen. 2, 1.—^x Chap. 41, 2.—^y 2 Or, *make straight*.—^z 2 Chron. 36, 22, 23; Ezra 1, 1; chap. 44, 28.

higher than his own kind, certainly not with the infinite God. The tenth verse varies the illustration, but with the same import. A "potsherd" is a dried fragment of a skin bottle, or else a broken piece of pottery, a worthless thing, with which helpless man is compared when he shows discontent with God's doings. See Jeremiah xviii, 1-5.

11-13. Ask me of things concerning my sons—Very differently ought the true Israelite to do. He should ask the Maker of all what is to be the outcome of things in Israel at a time when they seem bordering upon ruin. **I...made the earth, and...man**—Is it unsafe to leave desperate affairs in his hands? No human workmanship can say of Him that made it, He has no hands. Much of this kind of rebuke can be detected in chaps. xl, 12, 21, 28; xlv, 24; xlv, 18; xlviii, 13. **Have raised him up**—That is, Cyrus. **In righteousness**—"In" is expressive of *element in which*, hence, causal. Rightness, on the whole, and from all considerations, has determined the choosing of Cyrus as a leader subordinate with God in setting Israel back into Jerusalem and Zion. **Not for price nor reward**—Here is God's word for it, that Cyrus was not moved to co-act with God in relation to Israel from selfish motives. With character like this, Cy-

rus was worthy to be God's servant. Add to the reinstating of Israel in Judea, that he restored the treasures and the golden vessels to the temple, which also he helped to rebuild. Shall a true Israelite complain of God? **14, 15. The labour of Egypt**—The profits of labour upon her productive soil were the wealth of Egypt. See note on chap. xliii, 3. The restoration to Zion is here contemplated as if already accomplished. The idea of the verse, superadded to that of chap. xliii, 3, is as if it contained a promise of large portions of the Gentile world coming over to Israel when they shall be restored. And as they surrender they shall seem to say: "Only in Israel is God, (El, *Mighty One*,) and there is none else, no God, (*Elohim*,) none for one moment to be called by that name. **Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself**—Namely, in thy mysterious but gracious providences. The good he designed to bring to his people was not yet made apparent; but his heart of love was yearning over them, and his wisdom employed in working out for them a great deliverance. **God...the Saviour**—So termed because of his purpose to redeem them from their captivity.

^a Chap. 52, 3; see Rom. 3, 24.—^b Psa. 68, 31; 72, 10, 11; chap. 49, 23; 60, 9, 10, 14, 16; Zech. 8, 22, 23.—^c Psalm 149, 8.—^d 1 Cor. 14, 25.—^e Verse 5.—^f Psa. 44, 24; chap. 8, 17; 57, 17.—^g Chap. 44, 11.—^h Chap. 26, 4; verse 25; Rom. 11, 26.

rus was worthy to be God's servant. Add to the reinstating of Israel in Judea, that he restored the treasures and the golden vessels to the temple, which also he helped to rebuild. Shall a true Israelite complain of God?

14, 15. The labour of Egypt—The profits of labour upon her productive soil were the wealth of Egypt. See note on chap. xliii, 3. The restoration to Zion is here contemplated as if already accomplished. The idea of the verse, superadded to that of chap. xliii, 3, is as if it contained a promise of large portions of the Gentile world coming over to Israel when they shall be restored. And as they surrender they shall seem to say: "Only in Israel is God, (El, *Mighty One*,) and there is none else, no God, (*Elohim*,) none for one moment to be called by that name. **Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself**—Namely, in thy mysterious but gracious providences. The good he designed to bring to his people was not yet made apparent; but his heart of love was yearning over them, and his wisdom employed in working out for them a great deliverance. **God...the Saviour**—So termed because of his purpose to redeem them from their captivity.

16, 17. They shall be ashamed... Israel shall be saved—A marked antithesis. The sixteenth verse states the

in the LORD with an everlasting salvation: ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end. **18** For thus saith the LORD ^hthat created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited: ⁱ*I am the LORD, and there is none else.* **19** I have not spoken in ^ksecret, in a dark place of the earth: I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain: ^l*I the LORD speak righteousness, I declare things that are right.* **20** Assemble yourselves and come; draw near together, ye *that are* escaped of the nations: ^m*they have no knowl-*

^h Chap. 42. 5.—ⁱ Verse 5.—^k Dent. 30. 11: chap. 48. 16.—^l Psalm 19. 8; 119. 137, 138.—^m Chap. 44. 17-19; 46. 7; 48. 7; Rom. 1. 22, 23.—ⁿ Chap. 41. 22; 43. 9; 41. 7; 46. 10; 48. 14.

disappointment and disgust with idol religion on the part of its old devotees, (chap. xlii, 17,) both among Gentiles and idolatrous Jews. On the other hand, both faithful and reformed Israel, and converts thereto, with confident mien shall rejoice in conscious salvation now and evermore.

18, 19. In substance, God repeats the great things he has done to encourage the true Israel, and all who become such, to trust him and forget forever the absurd idol system they countenanced. **I am the Lord... there is none else**—Still rings, as it were, the never-ending refrain. From this oft-recurring idea there branch two others. (1) Prophecy coming from God is a thing of light—true knowledge: no black art, no voice from the secret, dark place, so necessary to idol prophets. (2) God's love, shown in creating all things and ruling all affairs, attests itself also toward all his true people. Obeying God's order to **seek** unto him, Israel has not to seek **in vain**, nor long to seek, as do idolaters. God is a real Being, not nonentity, like base, dumb idols.

20. Assemble... and come—The challenge again (chaps. xli, 21; xlii, 9) to try him and prove that he is an Infinite Reality. **Escaped of the nations**—The "escaped" are those who have survived the divine judgments which sweep over the idolatrous world. **Have no knowledge**

edge that set up the wood of their graven image, and pray unto a god *that* cannot save. **21** Tell ye, and bring them near; yea, let them take counsel together: ^o*who hath declared this from ancient time? who hath told it from that time? have not I the LORD?* ^p*and there is no God else besides me; a just God and a Saviour; there is none besides me.* **22** ^q*Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else.* **23** ^r*I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear.*

^o Verses 5, 14, 18; chap. 44. 8; 46. 9; 48. 3.—^p Psa. 22. 27; 65. 5.—^q Gen. 22. 16; Heb. 6. 13.—^r Rom. 14. 11; Phil. 2. 10.—^s Gen. 31. 53; Deut. 6. 13; Psa. 63. 11; chap. 65. 16.

—Silly idolaters have none. With such, reason and conscience are perverted, truth and error exchange meanings, good sense goes for nothing. The "escaped" ones seem, in this verse, invited to a convocation for a somewhat different object from the one in chap. xli, 1, namely, to test the question of prediction, to reason with those demented ones yet in favour of idols.

21. Tell ye... this—This what? Whether any one of idol worshippers has had from his god knowledge that Israel is to be restored to Zion? From what date in the past has an idol predicted this? **Have not I the LORD** alone done this? The controversy with idols takes this shape now. Moreover, **"I, the only one able to predict, am a just God and a Saviour"**; can carry out what I have predicted, and will do it."

22. Look unto me, and be ye saved—The "just God" is of most tender mercy also, and here invites all the ends of the earth to be "saved" in like manner with Israel.

23. Unto me—To God as supreme. His claim cannot be set aside. **Every knee shall bow**—Thus acknowledging him as the only supreme One. **Every tongue shall swear**—Same idea made lucid to all. Every being in the universe shall make confession, having the character of an oath, that Jehovah is all-supreme, righteous, just, yet merciful. Angels, dev-

24 *Surely shall one say, In the Lord have I ^arighteousness and strength: even to him shall men come; and ^uall that are incensed against him shall be ashamed. **25** ^vIn the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and ^wshall glory.

CHAPTER XLVI.

BEL ^aboweth down, Nebo stoopeth; their idols were upon the beasts, and upon the cattle: your carriages were heavy laden; ^bthey are a burden to the weary *beast*. **2** They stoop, they bow down together; they could not de-

3 Or, Surely he shall say of me, In the Lord is all righteousness and strength.—*t* Jer. 23, 5; *1* Cor. 1, 30.—*4* Heb. righteousnesses.—*u* Ch. 41, 11.—*v* Ver. 17.—*w* *1* Cor. 1, 31.—*a* Chap. 21, 9; Jer. 50, 2; 51, 44.

ils, and men, shall confess. The reader will recall St. Paul's use of this passage (Rom. xiv. 11) to show how all men shall confess accountability to God.

24, 25. In the Lord have I righteousness—This declaration will not be a forced oath of allegiance and homage. He shall know that God is so loving and just, and he so undeserving and lost, that he will come of his own hearty will to him. The incorrigible will be compelled in conscience and reason to confess also, but will hold out still in rebellion.

CHAPTER XLVI.

Sec. 5. THE IDOLS OVERTHROWN.

The transition is easy from Israel's deliverance by Cyrus, and blessings which are to follow through the Messiah, to the downfall of Babylon and its idols. In mockery of idols, a vivid picture follows of weary beasts of burden bearing away packed-up idols, instead of the idols being borne in processions of triumph by devotees amid the prostrations of other devotees along the way.

1, 2. Bel—The same as Baal (lord or master) of the Phœnicians, and Jupiter of the Greeks. Used with **Nebo**—the Mercury of the Greeks—it indicates the worship of the sun and planets.

As Hebrew great names took fragments of the names Elohim and Jehovah, for example, Joshua, Elihu, etc.,

liver the burden, ^cbut ¹themselves are gone into captivity.

3 Hearken unto me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel, ^dwhich are borne *by me* from the belly, which are carried from the womb: **4** And even to your old age ^eI am he; and even to hoar hairs ^fwill I carry you: I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you.

5 ^gTo whom will ye liken me, and make me equal, and compare me, that we may be like? **6** ^hThey lavish gold out of the bag, and weigh silver in the balance, and hire a goldsmith; and he

b Jer. 10, 5.—*c* Jer. 48, 7.—*1* H. *b*, their soul.—*d* Exod. 19, 4; Deut. 1, 31; 32, 11; Psa. 71, 6; chap. 63, 9.—*e* Psa. 102, 27; Mal. 3, 6.—*f* Psalm 48, 14; 71, 18.—*g* Chap. 40, 18, 25.—*h* Chap. 40, 19; 41, 6; 44, 12, 19; Jer. 10, 3.

so Babylonian monarchs and chief men were similarly named from "Bel" and "Nebo"—as Belshazzar and Nebuchadnezzar. The prophet here pictures these images as fallen, and being carried off to captivity. Tutelar deities are often so represented when captivity and distress come upon their worshippers. See Jer. xlviii, 7; xlix, 3; Hosea x, 5, 6. **Carriages**—This means, not vehicles, but things carried. See in Acts xxi, 15, "We took up our carriages." **Heavy laden**—To wit, camels, asses, oxen, etc.

3, 4. I will carry, and will deliver—The prophet shows the nation very differently cared for by its Lord Jehovah, who attended "its birth at the exodus, its infancy in the desert, its manhood under David and Solomon, its old age under the later prophets, when the first covenant was ready to decay." Idols do no such thing to their adherents and worshippers. See Num. xi. 12.

5. To whom will ye liken me—Compare with chap. xl, 18, 25. Is the compassionate and infinite Jehovah to be compared with the contemptible idols of the heathen?

6, 7. They lavish gold—A more brief but substantially similar picture to the one drawn in chap. xlv, 12-20. The idols of the more wealthy are here, doubtless, referred to. But costliness in worship, whether that of idols or the true God, does not in itself make it the more acceptable.

maketh it a god: they fall down, yea, they worship. **7** ⁱ They bear him upon the shoulder, they carry him, and set him in his place, and he standeth; from his place shall he not remove: yea, ^k one shall cry unto him, yet can he not answer, nor save him out of his trouble. **8** Remember this, and show yourselves men: ^l bring it again to mind, O ye transgressors. **9** ^m Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and ⁿ there is none else; I am God, and ^o there is none like me. **10** ^p Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times ^q the things that are not yet done, saying, ^r My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: **11** Calling a

ravenous bird ^s from the east, ^t the man ^u that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, ^v I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it.

12 Hearken unto me, ye ^w stouthearted, ^x that are far from righteousness: **13** ^y I bring near my righteousness; it shall not be far off, and my salvation ^z shall not tarry: and I will place ^a salvation in Zion for Israel my glory.

CHAPTER XLVII.

COME ^b down, and ^c sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon, sit on the ground: ^d there is no throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans: for thou

ⁱ Jer. 10. 5.—^k Chap. 45. 20.—^l Chap. 44. 19; 47. 7.—^m Deut. 32. 7.—ⁿ Chap. 45. 5, 21.—^o Chap. 45. 21.—^p Psalm 33. 11; Prov. 19. 21; 21. 30; Acts 5. 39; Heb. 6. 17.—^q Chap. 41. 2, 25.

8, 9. Remember this—The address is now, probably, to the Israelites. The impotence of idol gods was shown them in early days. See Deut. xxxii, 37–39. **Show yourselves men**—That is, learn the lesson of the impotence of idol gods to give aid; learn to stand firm, and resist staunchly the whole idol system. Know and assert who your true deity is.

11. Calling . . . from the east—Literally, *from the sun rising*. **A ravenous bird**—Cyrus was rapid in movement and execution; quick, keen sighted, strong. He is said to have taken for his ensign a golden eagle standing with outstretched wings. XENOPHON, *Cyrop.*, vii, 1.

12, 13. Hearken . . . ye stout-hearted—The *strong of heart*, who are far from righteousness, are all who, despite of these almighty demonstrations, still harden themselves, whether heathen or apostate Jews. The Lord still entreats them, showing unwillingness to give them up. As usual, there is in him compassion as well as power. These show unalterable love on Jehovah's part, and exhibit his character as one with that of our blessed Lord in the New Testament. See Matt. ii. **I bring . . . my righteousness**—"Righteousness," here, has the elements of demanding and bestowing—demanding men to submit, and bestowing pardon on submission. This attribute is in constant exercise. It

² Heb. *the man of my counsel*.—^r Ch. 44. 28; 45. 13.—^s Nu. 23. 19.—^t Ps. 76. 5.—^u Rom. 10. 3.—^v Ch. 51. 5; Rom. 1. 17; 3. 21.—^w Hab. 2. 3.—^x Chap. 62. 11.—^y Jer. 48. 18.—^z Ch. 3. 26.

shall not be far off—Salvation is the object for which it is in exercise, for which it is present. Zion is the seat of the devotions of the true Israel. The shekinah, or divine glory, shines within Zion and upon a regenerate people.

This is the theology of Isaiah, and it is the glorious Gospel throughout the Bible.

CHAPTER XLVII.

Sec. 6. DOWNFALL OF BABYLON.

First, (chap. xlvi,) it was, Down with the gods of Babylon; now it is, Down with the dwellers and city of Babylon itself. Judgment will not be complete till both are in the dust of captivity and destruction. The doom of idolatry is right upon the heels of the idolaters. The stout-hearted in Israel are herewith warned of their own guilt and its perils.

1. Virgin daughter—The proud city figured as a royal damsel (denoting city and inhabitants) stripped of her rich clothing, degraded from her lofty rank, and made a gazing stock of shame. For same figures see chap. xxiii, 12; xxxvii, 22. **Chaldeans**—This is the name of the peoples composing the strong nation which once occupied the city and territory of Babylon; a people from among whom Abraham was originally called. **Tender and delicate**—Her queenly

shalt no more be called tender and delicate. **2** Take the millstones, and grind meal: uncover thy locks, make bare the leg, uncover the thigh, pass over the rivers. **3** Thy nakedness shall be uncovered, yea, thy shame shall be seen: I will take vengeance, and I will not meet thee as a man. **4** As for our Redeemer, the LORD of hosts is his name, the Holy One of Israel. **5** Sit thou silent, and get thee into darkness, O daughter of the Chaldeans: for thou shalt no more be called, The lady of kingdoms.

e Exod. 11. 5; Judges 16. 21; Matt. 24. 41.—*d* Ch. 3. 17; 20. 4; Jer. 13. 22, 26; Nah. 3. 5.—*e* Rom. 12. 9.—*f* Chap. 43. 3, 14; Jer. 50. 34.—*g* 1 Sam. 2. 9.—*h* Ver. 7; ch. 13. 19; Dan. 2. 37.

dignity is to be abolished forever. Under the Persians the seat of empire was removed to Susa. For description of the capture of Babylon, see HERODOTUS, i, 191.

2. Grind meal—The figure here is that of servitude, with all the conditions of that state; the highest in rank, equally with the lowest, set to the meanest employments. **Uncover thy locks**—Rather, (Heb.,) *thy veil*. In the East a token of immodest shame, except with slaves. This uncovering was a dishonouring of the person. The other phrases indicate a march of menial captives onward to exile, wading rivers and bearing burdens.

3. I will take vengeance—This, with the words following, has many versions. It is a divine threat against Babylonia; God himself is to execute it. **I will not meet thee as a man**—There shall be no appeal to man about it: or, "I will appeal to no man:" (*Nägelsbach*;) "I will run on none out of whose way I must get myself:" (*Stier*;) "No man shall resist me:" (*Grotius*;) or, in executing vengeance "I will encounter no man:" (*Rosenmüller*;) that is, I will allow no man to resist me. This agrees with Grotius, and appears to be the true sense, and Noyes's translation does not essentially vary from it: "I will make peace with none."

4. As for our Redeemer, the Lord of hosts is his name—This appears to be antiphonal, that is, the breaking in of a chorus of voices. So Lowth and Gesenius. If Isaiah

6 I was wroth with my people, I have polluted mine inheritance, and given them into thine hand: thou didst show them no mercy; upon the ancient hast thou very heavily laid thy yoke.

7 And thou saidst, I shall be a lady for ever: so that thou didst not lay these things to thy heart, neither didst remember the latter end of it. **8** Therefore hear now this, thou that art given to pleasures, that dwellest carelessly, that sayest in thine heart, I am, and none else besides me; I shall not sit as a

i 2 Sam. 24. 14; 2 Chron. 28. 9; Zech. 1. 15.—*k* Chap. 43. 28.—*l* Deut. 28. 50.—*m* Verse 5; Rev. 18. 7.—*n* Chap. 46. 8.—*o* Dent. 32. 29.—*p* Verse 10; Zeph. 2. 15.—*q* Rev. 18. 7.

be the author, which there seems abundant reason to believe, these last twenty-seven chapters were not recited in public, but in the presence only of the prophets in the college at Jerusalem, of which Isaiah was probably the head. This accounts for the strophical character of all this poetry.

5. Sit thou silent—The prophet spoke, in preceding verse, in his own person. He now speaks in God's name. He uses imperatives. Hebraistically these are predictives, the same as, **Sit thou silent: lady (or mistress) of kingdoms thou shalt no more be called.**

6. I was wroth with my people—Angry with his people, Jehovah suffered them to be treated as polluted. **I...polluted mine inheritance**—Allusion is here made to chap. xliii, 28: "Therefore I have profaned the princes of the sanctuary, and have given Jacob to the curse." **And given them into thine hand**—Into the hand of the Chaldeans or Babylonians, who showed them no mercy. See 2 Chron. xxxvi, 17. **Upon the ancient**—Meaning the aged ones of Israel, a class of persons for whose welfare Jehovah had usually tenderly cared.

8. Carelessly—In no anxiety about efforts of Cyrus to take the city. According to Xenophon, the princes and whole court at Babylon looked with contempt on Cyrus. She said, **I am, and none else besides me**—Literally, *I am, and the absence of me there is none*. Profanely she parodies the divine saying, "I am Jehovah, and be-

widow, neither shall I know the loss of children: **9** But ^rthese two *things* shall come to thee: ^ain a moment in one day, the loss of children, and widowhood: they shall come upon thee in their perfection ^rfor the multitude of thy sorceries, ^{and} for the great abundance of thine enchantments.

10 For thou ^ahast trusted in thy wickedness: ^rthou hast said, None seeth me. Thy wisdom and thy knowledge, it hath ^rperverted thee; ^{and} thou hast said in thine heart, I *am*, and none else besides me.

11 Therefore shall evil come upon thee; thou shalt not know ²from whence it riseth: and mischief shall fall upon thee; thou shalt not be able to ³put it off: and ²desolation shall come upon thee suddenly, *which* thou shalt not know.

^r Chap. 51. 19.—^s 1 Thess. 5. 3.—^t Nab. 3. 4.
^u Psa. 52. 7.—^v Chap. 29. 15; Ezek. 8. 12;
9. 9.—¹ Or, *caused thee to turn away*.—
^w Verse 8.—² Heb. *the morning thereof*.—
3 Heb. *expiate*.

sides me there is none else." This strain of defiance and of self-security continues to verse 11.

10, 11. Fancying thyself secure in thy wickedness, thou sayest, **None seeth me. Therefore**—As a reason for the chastisement about to fall on thee. **Not know...whence it riseth**—That day of thy woe shall come unexpectedly; because of thy untiring defiance, thou shalt not know how or whence it so suddenly comes. It hath no *dawn* to thee. In astrological divining the Chaldeans were expert, but it had no availing power in their extremity. When the morn appeared the Egyptians were destroyed; at sunrise Sodom and Gomorrah were overwhelmed; so, also, Babylon had no warning of coming evil.

12. Wherein thou hast laboured—Namely, in astrology, magic, or sorceries, through which Babylon might attempt to thwart the divine decree.

13. Multitude of thy counsels—The whole magian school. **Astrol-ogers**—Rawlinson (*Monarchies*, iii, 425) says: "Most of the astronomical tablets discovered at Babylon are of an astrological character, recording the supposed influences of the heavenly bodies, singly, in conjunction, or

12 Stand now with thine enchantments, and with the multitude of thy sorceries, wherein thou hast laboured from thy youth; if so be thou shalt be able to profit, if so be thou mayest prevail.

13 ^rThou art wearied in the multitude of thy counsels. Let now ²the ^aastrol-ogers, the stargazers, ⁵the monthly prognosticators, stand up, and save thee from *these things* that shall come upon thee. **14** Behold, they shall be ^aas stubble; the fire shall burn them; they shall not deliver ⁶themselves from the power of the flame: *there shall not be a coal to warm at, nor fire to sit before it.*

15 Thus shall they be unto thee with whom thou hast laboured, *even* ^bthy merchants, from thy youth: they shall wander every one to his quarter; none shall save thee.

¹ 1 Thess. 5. 3.—² Chap. 57. 10.—³ Chap. 44. 25; Dan. 2. 2.—⁴ Heb. *reviewers of the heavens*.—⁵ Heb. *that give knowledge concerning the months*.—^a Nab. 1. 1st; Mal. 4. 1.—⁶ Heb. *their souls*.—^b Rev. 18. 11.

in opposition, upon all sublunary affairs." **Stargazers**—The zodiacal system is supposed to be in a great measure due to the Babylonians. The object of astrology was mainly to bring to light on each new moon what was to happen, by dividing the heavens into sections, watching conjunctions, oppositions, etc., of the planets, and making out the horoscope or sign which arose at the time when one was born.

14. The prophet further says, **They shall be as stubble**—All the astrol-ogers, or wise men, in whom Babylon trusted, and Babylon itself. **Fire** shall consume them; not, indeed, material fire, but what will be as destructive. The whole power of Babylon shall be consumed, as fire consumes stubble, and there shall be no help for them. **Not...a coal to warm at, nor fire to sit before it**—The original is somewhat obscure, but the sense appears to be: The consumption of every thing shall be so complete that not a coal nor cinder shall be left to warm one by, or to bake one's bread before it.

15. None shall save thee—Babylon was well situated for traffic with the north, northwest, east, and south. But all her diviners, her arts of

CHAPTER XLVIII.

HEAR ye this, O house of Jacob, which are called by the name of Israel, and ^aare come forth out of the waters of Judah, ^bwhich swear by the name of the LORD, and make mention of the God of Israel, ^cbut not in truth, nor in righteousness. **2** For they call them-

^a Psalm 68. 26.—^b Deut. 6. 13; chap. 65. 16; Zeph. 1. 5.—^c Jer. 4. 2; 5. 2.—^d Chap. 52. 1.

astrology, her science, her foreigners and commerce and fertile soil, her massive walls and brazen gates—not all these combined can save her. Her cup is full, and Nemesis awaits her destruction. She never recovered her ancient greatness.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

Sec. 7. THE FORMER THINGS AND THE NEW.

The first cycle of the Later Prophecies closes in this chapter. The victories of Cyrus and the fall of Babylon are announced with another rebuke and another word of consolation to Israel. "Former things" (verse 3) are contemplated as fulfilled. "New things" (verse 6) have preparation made for them by still larger fulfilment of predictions respecting the times of Messiah. Rebuke makes the first part, and encouragement the second part, in the divisions of the chapter. Rebuke chiefly applies to times from Isaiah to the return from exile; and encouragement, from the return to Messiah's literal coming. The whole exhibits a transition from the period of prophecy to the days of the New Testament.

1, 2. Hear ye this—Not something new, but already reiterated truths. **House of Jacob**—"Jacob" is the natural name of Isaac's second son. **Called . . . Israel**—"Israel" is the spiritual name of the same person. See Gen. xxxii, 2, xxxv, 10. Both together is a circumlocution for Israelites or members of the ancient Church. **Waters of Judah**—After the revolt of the ten tribes there were, as the result of labours by the prophets in the kingdom of Israel, doubtless not a few there who constituted the remnant of

selves ^dof the holy city, and ^estay themselves upon the God of Israel: The Lord of hosts *is* his name. **3** 'I have declared the former things from the beginning; and they went forth out of my mouth, and I showed them; I did *them* suddenly, ^fand they came to pass. **4** Because I knew that that thou art

^e Micah 3. 11; Rom. 2. 17.—^f Chap. 41. 22; 42. 9; 43. 9; 44. 7. 8; 45. 21; 46. 9, 10.—^g Josh. 21. 45.

the true Israel. (Elijah thought it was not so till it was divinely told him there were seven thousand of them. **1 Kings xix, 18.**) From among these, large numbers must have mingled with the people of Judah, so that in the exile the whole twelve tribes were more or less represented. Though the main body were of Judah, yet all vied with each on their comparative reform in Babylon and in countries thereto belonging. **Which swear by the name of the Lord**—Because this "swearing" did happen without living faith, such as represents the standard of life called for by Jehovah through his prophet, and explains the words, **not in truth, nor in righteousness**, herein his people deserved rebuke and warning.

3-5. I have declared—Or, have announced. **Former things**—Former events, before they came to pass; or, as some suppose, "and they have come to pass." Chap. xlii, 9; xlv, 7, 8. **Suddenly**—They came to pass so unexpectedly that the prophecy could not have been fulfilled through human means; at least, human sagacity could not have foretold them. The argument runs thus: Through my prophet I announced in former times a certain prediction—for example, the destruction of the Assyrian army—and it suddenly took place. Chap. xxxvii, 36. Human sagacity could not have foretold that event, nor could human means have brought it about. Not long past I predicted, not an *ideal* fact—namely, the raising up of a deliverer, Cyrus, for my people at Babylon—it shall prove an actual fact. Other instances of prediction and fulfilment could be given. No idol system is equal to this. The

¹obstinate, and ²thy neck is an iron sinew, and thy brow brass; **5** ¹I have even from the beginning declared *it* to thee; before it came to pass I showed *it* thee: lest thou shouldst say, Mine idol hath done them; and my graven image, and my molten image, hath commanded them. **6** Thou hast heard, see all this; and will not ye declare *it*? I have showed thee new things from this time, even hidden things, and thou didst not know them. **7** They are created now, and not from the beginning; even before the day when thou heardest them

not; lest thou shouldst say, Behold, I knew them. **8** Yea, ²thou heardest not; yea, thou knewest not; yea, from that time *that* thine ear was not opened: for I knew that thou wouldest deal very treacherously, and wast called ¹a transgressor from the womb.

9 ²For my name's sake ²will I defer mine anger, and for my praise will I refrain for thee, that I cut thee not off. **10** Behold, ²I have refined thee, but not ²with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction. **11** ²For mine own sake, even for mine own sake, will I do *it*: for

¹ Heb. *hard*.—*h* Exod. 32. 9: Deut. 31. 27.
—*i* Verse 3.—*k* Chap. 6. 9, 10; 26. 11; Jer. 5. 21; Matt. 13. 15.—*l* Psalm 58. 3.—*m* Psalm

79. 9; 106. 8; chap. 43. 25; verse 11; Ezek. 20. 9, 14, 22, 44.—*n* Psal. 78. 38.—*o* Psal. 66. 10.—*p* 2 Or, *for silver*. Ezek. 22. 20-22.—*p* Verse 9.

facts of the past cannot be disputed. **Because I knew**, etc.—I made former predictions and fulfilled them, because I knew **that thou art obstinate**, unbelieving, not easily convinced, with neck stiff as if made of sinews of iron. **Thy brow brass**—As hard and insensible to spiritual influence as brass. The fifth verse recapitulates, in order to confirm, the argument of verse 3.

6, 7. Thou hast heard, etc.—The words are addressed to the Jews as if in Babylon. They have already heard enough from Jehovah. They have no need of more concerning the prediction of their deliverance through Cyrus. **See all this**—In God's eye it is all fulfilled: see you the fact likewise. That is, believe Jehovah, the same as if its accomplishment were before your eyes. **And will not ye declare it**—Cause it to be known, testify to its certainty from perfect knowledge of God's veracity? **New things... hidden things**—Perhaps among them Israel's deliverances from Babylon, and their restoration to their own land and to God's worship; not yet accomplished, but as certain as if they were. **They are created now**—Hence, they are the same as if already accomplished, and the Jews are to treat the prediction accordingly. The fulfilment is ideal but real. Babylon is to be destroyed, and Israel is to be delivered. Take these facts as made known by Jehovah, not by idol oracles or by human sagacity. No excuse for you to do

otherwise. God's veracity has often enough been proved to you. It is mockery of Jehovah to say, **Behold, I knew them** before.

8. Thou knewest not—The phrases in this verse are each and all of them denials of the boast, "Behold, I knew them." Tried all his life by the subtle and culpable habit of un-faith in the Jews, the prophet foresees the same habit in them when they are just on the eve of actual deliverance from Babylon. He says: **I knew that thou wouldest deal... treacherously... a transgressor**. All evidence possible from the doings of the Almighty God does not fully convince you. You will still be doubters.

9-11. But if so perverse, why desire to restore them to Jerusalem and Judah? The answer is, **For my name's sake**. I forbear with all the world: I forbear with the Jews especially, that in them, whom I have chosen morally to train the world, my **name**—my honour, compassion, method of severe and kindly discipline—may be shown to all. They are my people, the medium I have appointed through which the Redeemer and his salvation are to come to the whole world. Israel is of no account in himself. Silver is silver, though mixed with dross, which is easily purified by fire. But Israel, having more dross in his nature, I purify in the fiery furnace of affliction. The figure is taken from the ancient refiners, who subjected bullion more or less encumbered with dross to heats of varied degrees in the furnace. (*Gro-*

^q how should *my name* be polluted? and
^r I will not give my glory unto another.

12 Hearken unto me, O Jacob and Israel, my called; ^s I am he; I am the first, I also am the last. **13** Mine hand also hath laid the foundation of the earth, and ^t my right hand hath spanned the heavens: *when* ^u I call unto them, they stand up together. **14** ^v All ye, assemble yourselves, and hear; which

^q Deuteronomy 32. 26, 27; Ezekiel 20. 9.—
^r Chapter 42. 8.—^s Deuteronomy 32. 39.—
^t Chapter 41. 4; 44. 6; Revelation 1. 17; 22. 13.
^u Psalm 102. 25.

tius.) The subjection of Israel to the fiercer heats was the more perfectly to purify them, for He cannot tolerate the slightest impurity in his own. He compounds not with an infinitesimal degree thereof. He is no compromiser.

12, 13. Hearken unto me—Renewal of the consolation. The second and brighter part of the message begins here. The chief elements compiled from chapters xl to xlvii, are brought together in these verses, and addressed to Israel with emphasis.

My called—The double-called: from Chaldean Abram, first; the spiritual offspring from Abraham, next. The promise is re-settled by the oath several times before stated in terms. See chapters xli, 4; xlii, 8; xliii, 11. etc.

Mine hand...laid the foundation—The prophet urgently impresses on the people God's eternity, omniscience, and omnipotence, as evidence the highest possible that what he predicts or announces through his prophet is entitled to confidence. The oath can be made by none higher. The greater includes the less. Ability to create certainly implies the lesser ability to foretell. No words can characterize the absurdity and stupidity of doubting divine predictions.

14. Assemble yourselves, and hear—A call to the people—most probably the heathen—to convene, and to consider the subject to be brought before them. **Which among them**—Among the idol deities, with whom is the controversy. **Hath declared these things**—The "things" heretofore predicted of Jehovah—the coming deliverance of Israel through

among them hath declared these *things*?
^x The LORD hath loved him: ^y he will do his pleasure on Babylon, and his arm shall be on the Chaldeans. **15** I, even I, have spoken; yea, ^z I have called him: I have brought him, and he shall make his way prosperous.

16 Come ye near unto me, hear ye this; ^a I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; from the time that it

³ Or, *the palm of my right hand hath spread out.*—^v Chap. 40. 26.—^w Chap. 41. 22; 43. 9; 44. 7; 45. 20, 21.—^x Chap. 45. 1.—^y Chap. 44. 28.—^z Chap. 45. 1, 2.—^a Chap. 45. 19.

Cyrus, and the destruction he should bring on Israel's oppressors, the Babylonians. **He will do his pleasure**—The "he" we take to refer to Cyrus, God's agent in this work; the "his" to God himself. **His arm**—That of Cyrus. **Shall be on the Chaldeans**—To punish and subdue them.

15. I, even I, have spoken...I have called—The Lord is here the speaker. The thrice-repeated "I" denotes the strength of purpose—the certainty of the fulfilment of the prediction.

16. This verse is hard to understand from ambiguity. Come ye near unto me, hear ye this—It is scarcely to be doubted that the party summoned is Israel, and that the subject to be communicated is, what follows to the latter member of the verse. But who is the speaker? Some hold it to be the prophet in behalf of Jehovah; but most of the commentators think it is Jehovah himself, summoning his nation to hear still further concerning himself. Moreover, from the interactions of personality in the Godhead of Jehovah in trinity, and from the well-settled facts as deduced from the two Testaments, that the transacting divinity, or the Jehovah of the Old Testament, is the Son of God of the New Testament, not a small number of expositors find a satisfying explanation of the verse in supposing the Second Person of the Trinity to be here the speaker. Among these may be named Basil, Augustine, Vitringa, Alexander, Henderson, Stier, Delitzsch, Birks, Nögelbach, etc. **I have not spoken in secret**—The coincidence of resembling verbiage in texts known to be

was, there *am* I: and now ^bthe Lord God, and his Spirit, hath sent me.

^b Chap. 61. 1; Zech. 2. 8, 9, 11.

spoken by or applying to Christ, is taken as evidence of the truth of this theory, as in Christ's words, John xviii, 20. **From the time that it was, there am I**—See Prov. viii, 27, and Christ's words, "Before Abraham was, I am:"—"I am hath sent me," etc.: language quite coincident in expression with passages appertaining to facts and features of Christ. **And now**—Antithetic to the previous "from the beginning." From the foundation of the earth (Prov. viii) I was present through human history, as the Wisdom of God, aiding the plan looking to man's redemption. **And (or but) now the Lord God, and his Spirit, hath sent me**—The prophet is the mouth-piece in these antithetic sentences, but for whom does he speak in this? For himself; as not a few hold, or for Christ, or Messiah, yet unincarnated, as the majority of expositors hold? Evidently, from lack of the conditions required, not for the prophet. The conditions are something more than being the recorder of these statements. The prophet elsewhere (chapter vi, 8) speaks of and for the three Persons, and most probably here for the Second Person. See, for the same reference, Exod. xxiii, 20; Isa. lxi, 1; Mal. iii, 1; John iii, 34, vii, 16, xvii, 18, and xx, 21. From these citations the clause is by most settled as meaning Christ here, and should read, for this meaning: "The Lord God hath sent me, with his Spirit." Sent me to Israel, with the Spirit's aid, to enlarge in Israel's mind (now about to close his exile) the great consolation, and (as *Logos*, or *Word*) also the revelation. Christ's mission here, then, is not the incarnation, but the signal providence of the return from Babylon. By this interpretation the predicates of the Jehovah of the Old Testament are in nowise changed, who is throughout the divine Regent, the divine Wisdom and Revealer. Co-acting with Jehovah the Father, the source of all divine counsels, and with the Spirit who inspires leadership and

17 Thus saith ^cthe Lord, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; I *am* the Lord

^c Chap. 43. 14; 44. 6, 24; verse 20.

prophecy, He, Jehovah the Son, administers, disciplines, consoles, and instructs.

Some of the old reformed theologians have stoutly claimed, in this view of the Old Testament tenor and purport, that strong proofs of the doctrine of the Trinity can be made out. It is to be observed, however, that Calvin, the great exegete of the Reformation, was gravely conservative on this passage. He says: "This verse interpreters explain in various ways. Many refer it to Christ, but the prophet designs no such thing. Such forced and violent interpretations are to be avoided." Barnes also says, with emphasis: "It would require more time, and toil, and ingenuity, to demonstrate that this passage had reference to Messiah, than it would to demonstrate the doctrines of the Trinity and Divinity of the Redeemer from unequivocal declarations of the New Testament." No doubt this caution is extreme. In pursuance of a *proper* caution, this much may be admitted: In so far as the prophet speaks and acts in prophecy as the speaker and writer for Jehovah, who, in the New Testament, by various indications and proofs, appears in the incarnated divinity of Jesus Christ, so far only are these words to be regarded in a Messianic point of view. Further, whether the prophet himself apprehended this dogmatic view of the words is far from certain. The action of the Revealer upon the old prophetic minds in their deliverances was doubtless in proportion to their power at the time to apprehend. See Zechariah ii, 7-9.

17-19. The exhortation continues. **The Lord, thy Redeemer**—As compared with any other, he is the right and rightful leader of Israel. He is comprehensively the Redeemer of accepted Israel, especially accompanying his deliverances first to last, from Egypt, from foes in Canaan, from Babylon, and from the powers of evil in all time. He is Redeemer and Deliv-

thy God which teacheth thee to profit, ^a which leadeth thee by the way *that* thou shouldst go. 18 ^e Oh that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! ^f then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea: 19 ^g Thy seed also had been as the sand, and the offspring of thy bowels like the gravel thereof; his name should not have been cut off nor destroyed from before me.

^d Psalm 32. 8.—^e Deut. 32. 29; Psa. 81. 13.
—^f Psalm 119. 165.—^g Gen. 22. 17; Hos. 1. 10.
—^h Chap. 52. 11; Jer. 50. 8; 51. 6, 45; Zech. 2.

erer of all God's Israel. Did this Israel but know and act upon the knowledge that God truly is his Redeemer, present at all times for his deliverances, what *peace* would be his, or, as the original (*shālôm*) means, what prosperity, soundness, wholeness, health! **As a river**—Full flowing, and, like the Nile, overflowing, bringing glory of verdure in a parched land. **Righteousness**—The "righteousness" of Israel means its utter freedom from idolatry; its purity and holiness, and many fruits of religion as their result; and these becoming more and more in abundance and power, like **the waves of the sea!** What an image is this! Isaiah could know the easy use of such a figure. The Mediterranean was, as it were, in his presence. Did "the Great Unknown" of the neologists see much of the waves of the sea in Mesopotamia? The figure is that of measureless abundance of righteousness. **Thy seed**—Posterity. Blessings physical are of great account with the Semitic peoples. The thought here is, of a holy and enduring nation, headed by Messiah, moving forward to victory till triumph is reached in the heavenly Jerusalem.

20-22. **Go ye forth of Babylon**—The message closes here. The exiled but redeemed ones get orders for a march to Zion. The word **flee** is not a note of alarm; the speed and joy of coming deliverance is the idea; or possibly Jer. li, 45, tallying with the idea in Rev. xviii, 4, may explain this part of the message. But the call is for the voice of song loud enough for **the end of the earth** to hear. The

20 ^a Go ye forth of Babylon, flee ye from the Chaldeans, with a voice of singing declare ye, tell this, utter it *even* to the end of the earth; say ye, The LORD hath ⁱ redeemed his servant Jacob. 21 And they ^k thirsted not *when* he led them through the deserts: he ^l caused the waters to flow out of the rock for them: he clave the rock also, and the waters gushed out. 22 ^m *There is no peace, saith the LORD, unto the wicked.*

6, 7; Rev. 18. 4.—ⁱ Exod. 19. 4-6; ch. 44. 22, 23.
—^k Chap. 41. 17, 18.—^l Exod. 17. 6; Num. 20. 11; Psa. 105. 41.—^m Chap. 57. 21.

redemption of Jacob is the subject of the singing. **Thirsted not . . . the deserts**—The exodus memorial is called to mind afresh by this later deliverance; or, that is made the type of this, in that, wonderful as was the provision and supply of that departure across deserts, this shall be greatly more wonderful in these regards. All is spiritual; waters of salvation flowed forth from the smitten rock, and that rock was Christ, accompanying them with ever-living abundance of grace and prosperity. The section closes with a contrast. **No peace . . . unto the wicked**—No *shālôm*—no sound health, no prosperity, to the loose, irregular, undevout sons of Israel, holding adherence half with Jehovah and half with idol or world worship. No peace—no joyful, solid hope—is pronounced to such in this final remonstrance.

Thus the thrilling section ends. God is all, man in himself is nothing, idols are utter nothingness. With these truths divinely established this first series of the three concludes. It began with **comfort ye**, emphasized. **No peace unto the wicked** is its last word. Throughout, the struggle with idolatry and its effects has been a travail. This subject has been turned over and over, and viewed from every point with remonstrance and exhortation. It is now exhausted; it comes no more to the foreground. The prophet is also done with Babylon. Nor do we hear any more of Cyrus. From this on, the messages are of hope, not to redeemed sons of Jacob merely, but to all the world.

CHAPTER XLIX.

LISTEN, ^aO isles, unto me; and hearken, ye people, from far; ^bThe

^a Chap. 41. 1. — ^b Verse 5; Jer. 1. 5; Matt. 1.

The Times of Messiah.

CHAPTERS xlix-lx.

CHAPTER XLIX.

Sec. 1. MESSIAH'S MESSAGE TO THE GENTILES.

In this series (chapters xlix-lx) of the later prophecies, the Spirit of God carries the prophet beyond the captivity and the times of Cyrus—the main subjects of the former series—to the coming of the promised Immanuel and the times of the Gospel. The main subject here is, “the sufferings of Christ (vicarious) and the glory that should follow,” ranging from the birth of our Lord to the final redemption of Zion, when he will be the glory of his people Israel.—*Birks.*

SECOND SERIES, chaps. xlix-lx.

- | | |
|-----------------------|--|
| <i>First Trilogy.</i> | 1. Messiah's Voice to the Heathen, chap. xlix. |
| | 2. Messiah's Voice to Israel, chap. l-lii, 10. |
| | 3. Messiah and the Gospel, chap. lii, 11-lv, 18. |
| <i>Sec'd Trilogy.</i> | 4. Woe on Idolaters, chap. lvi-lvii. |
| | 5. Sentence on Formalism, chap. lviii. |
| <i>Peroration.</i> | 6. Rebuke and Promise to Israel, chap. lix. |
| | 7. Zion's Final Glory, chap. lx. |

The refutation of idolatry being completed, the deliverance from Babylon declared as coming to pass, the power, wisdom, and prescience of God being thoroughly exhibited, the prophet in this section presents the character and office of the Messiah, declares the extent of his commission, and shows that from the world of the Gentiles as well as of the Jews, is to be gathered the members of the Messiah's kingdom. In a general way these have been already touched upon in the preceding chapters; the discussion is now to be more specific.

1. **Listen**.—An earnest call-word, because something of importance is to be communicated. **O isles**—Literally, coastlands; islands and maritime

Lord hath called me from the womb; from the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name. **2** And he

20, 21; Luke 1. 15, 31; John 10. 36; Gal. 1. 15.

regions, generally westward from the scene of the speaker. **From far**—Gentile nations as far away as their geographic location could then have been known. **Hath called me**—With evangelical expositors this pronoun “me” is the Messiah, distinctly and indisputably. Grotius, Gesenius, and the schools following them, wrench the sense into a reference to the prophet Isaiah. This sense is truly improbable, if only because the prophet has never in this wise so brought himself into the foreground before. He is the medium only of the word of God. The nearest to his being or assuming more than this, is in semblance of phraseology in chap. xlviii, 16, (where see note,) in which the decision is radically diverse to such an idea. There is no doubt at all entertained as to the speaker here being the Messiah by those who believe the Old Testament recognises its all-ruling divinity, Jehovah, to be divinity identical with the incarnate Logos of the New Testament. The circumstantiality of the description in the context also bears out this view. See Matt. i, 20, 21; Luke i, 35. In a passage parallel to this, (Jer. i, 5,) the reference is plainly to Jeremiah; and in another, (Isa. xlv, 2,) as plainly to Israel. But what the speaker here says is so unique, so glorious withal, that the reference reaches far beyond the vocation or action of any single prophet or any individual man, subject to the limitations of human life or human strength.—*Delitzsch.* As in chap. xlii, 1, so here, the ideal speaker is the Messiah considered as the head of his people, and as forming with them one complex person. At the present stage of the study of Christology, it is not certain that the prophet conceived the future Church and the Head of the Church as separately individualized entities. At one time it is the spiritual Israel, or the Church,

hath made ^cmy mouth like a sharp sword; ^din the shadow of his hand hath he hid me, and made me ^ea polished shaft; in his quiver hath he hid me; **3** And said unto me, 'Thou *art* my servant, O Israel, ^fin whom I will be glorified. **4** ^hThen I said, I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nought, and in vain: *yet* surely my

^c Chap. 11, 4; 51, 16; Hosea 6, 5; Heb. 4, 12; Rev. 1, 16. — ^d Chap. 51, 16. — ^e Psa. 45, 5. — ^f Chapter 42, 1; Zech. 3, 8. — ^g Chapter 44, 23; John 13, 31; 15, 8; Eph. 1, 6. — ^h Ezek. 3, 19.

that is prominent: at another, it is the Church on its anointed mission to the Gentiles, condensed into the conception of a single person as the divine agent, or outflow of salvation to all the nations. The latter, under the legitimate designation of Messiah, seems the proper view to take here.

2. My mouth—That is, my words, cutting, penetrating, because they pierce and cause pain to guilty souls: represented in Heb. iv, 12, as "sharper than any two-edged sword," and in Rev. i, 16, as "a sharp two-edged sword" going "out of his mouth." **In the shadow of his hand hath he hid me**—Ages were required to prepare mankind for the complete coming of the Christ; meanwhile the process of development was the "shading of God's hand;" rendering obscure the full expression of Messiah's meaning till the intelligible "fulness of times" should come; when his words became not merely a cutting sword at both edges, but a polished shaft or dart from Jehovah's quiver, piercing into men's hearts.

3. Thou art my servant, O Israel—Already has it been seen, (chap. xlii, 1,) that Israel as a nation formed with our prophet a basis idea contained in the terms, *servant of Jehovah*; then, true to his calling and faithful to Jehovah, Israel became the central idea in that term; and, lastly, Israel, as God's personal servant, is found in the idea of the true Israel's highest headship, the *Messiah*. In this last sense is the word servant of Jehovah, or the Church and its Head in one, to be taken here. **In whom I will be glorified**—"Glorified" through his instrumentality—the

judgment is with the LORD, and ⁱmy work with my God.

5 And now, saith the LORD ^jthat formed me from the womb *to be* his servant, to bring Jacob again to him, ^kThough Israel ^lbe not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the LORD, and my God shall be my strength. **6** And he said, ^mIt is a light thing that

ⁱ Or, *my reward*, ch. 40, 10; 62, 11. — ^j Ver. 1. — ^k Or, *That Israel may be gathered to him, and I may, etc.* — ^l Matt. 23, 37. — ^m Or, *Art thou lighter than that thou shouldest, etc.*

consecrated Church and its Head—in saving the world. The innermost holy Israel as an agency is personified in the term "servant." A like example of appealing to a representative quality is in Matt. xvi, 18, "Thou art Peter;" representing the Peter, on the one hand, a rock-like man confessing Christ as Son of the living God, and on the other hand, Christ, the eternal One confessed; and both together concentered into one term, namely, *Confession*, the ROCK on which the God's Church is built.

4. This innermost holy Israel coming to an ideal personality, the Messiah, has wrought long and wearily with little apparent result. The world seems no better for his labours. **Yet surely my judgment is with the Lord**—Or, *my reward*, (margin.) The judgment in the case is in my favour—my labour shall not be for naught. All is with God, and he will not permit it to be in vain.

5. And now, saith the Lord—What he says is in the next verse. The words which follow are parenthetical, and explanatory of Jehovah, who now speaks. **That formed me from the womb**—Who appointed me Messiah before my incarnation. **To bring Jacob**—Not Jews, as such only, back to the worship of Jehovah. To these he was first to appear; yet, though they still reject Messiah, he is to be glorious in meeting with better success among the Gentiles. This is the import of what he was to say.

6. It is a light thing—Or, *too light*; great as it was to bring back only Israel in its entirety—as they claimed to be their exclusive right—yet it was a greater thing to bring also the Gentile

thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the ⁴preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a ¹light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth. **7** Thus saith the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel, *and* his Holy One, ^m to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers, ⁿKings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship, because of the Lord that is faithful, *and* the Holy One of Israel, and he shall choose thee. **8** Thus saith the Lord, ^oIn an acceptable time have I heard

thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee: and I will preserve thee, ^pand give thee for a covenant of the people, to ^qestablish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages; **9** That thou mayest say ^rto the prisoners, Go forth; to them that *are* in darkness, Show yourselves. They shall feed in the ways, and their pastures *shall be* in all high places. **10** They shall not ^shunger nor thirst; ^tneither shall the heat nor sun smite them: for he that hath mercy on them ^ushall lead them, even by the springs of water shall he guide them. **11** ^vAnd I will make all

⁴ Or, *desolations*.—¹ Chapter 42. 6; 60. 3; Luke 2. 32; Acts 13. 47; 26. 18.—^m Chap. 53. 3; Matt. 26. 67.—^o Or, *to him that is despised in soul*.—ⁿ Psa. 72. 10, 11; verse 23.

^o Psa. 69. 13; 2 Cor. 6. 2.—^p Chap. 42. 6.—^q Or, *raise up*.—^r Chap. 42. 7; Zech. 9. 13.—^s Rev. 7. 16.—^t Psa. 121. 6.—^u Psa. 23. 2.—^v Chap. 40. 4.

world, vast numbers of whom were to be ranked by conversion as members of Messiah's kingdom equally with the **preserved of Israel**. Chapter xi, 12; Acts xiii, 46, 47; xxvi, 16, 17. These references in Acts have their application and fulfilment in the facts of St. Paul's ministry to the Gentiles.

7. Till now the Servant of God, the Messiah, has spoken; but in these verses his words seem lost in those of Jehovah, who, though unchanged in nature with that of Messiah, enters on the function of another personality, that of the first Person in the divine Trinity. It seems otherwise difficult to account for these varied interactions, except it be to conceive Jehovah here as the Eternal Divinity of Christ addressing Messiah in his apparently human, lowly, condition of absolute subjection to his work during his period of humiliation. This view may best explain the difficulty. The words here used may, too, be but the prelude to those soon to be heard in chap. liii, 3. **Redeemer**—He who has, as Jehovah, always served Israel. **Holy One**—The Holy God adored by Israel. **Whom man despiseth**—The Hebrew is, לְבוֹזָה נֶפֶשׁ, (*libhzhoh nephesh*), *to the one hated from the soul*; that is, one who is heartily contemned; "who is (chapter liii) despised and rejected." Messiah is one who submits to this condition for the time being. But the promise is: Before such a one, though

now rejected by the Jews, princes of the Gentiles shall yet bow to him; shall yield to him as ruler, as King of kings; because God who chose him is faithful. His covenant with Abraham and Israel reached in intent to all that the name and outcome of Israel imported.

8–10. In an acceptable time—Better, *in a time of favour*; that is, in the far future times, when Providence shall guide to changes in favour of men's hearing, pondering, and accepting the Gospel. The same idea is in the parallel expression, **in a day of salvation**. Then God is the infinite helper; then he restores to infinite honour for the endured humiliation. **Covenant of the people**—In verse 7 Israel has the name *gôî*, as if Gentiles not in God's covenant; here the Church, though composed mainly of Gentiles, has the name *âm*, people, usually given to Israel. Gentiles, once not a people, are to become the people of God. Romans ix, 24–26; 1 Peter ii, 10. Messiah is to seal his covenant with this new people. **Desolate**—Explained in the next verse. This verse shows that the "desolate" places are not waste places in Judea, but the moral wastes of the heathen world. Chap. xliii, 6, 7. **In a day of salvation** it shall avail for God's Anointed to say to all feeling themselves captives: **Go forth**—From your prison house; come out from your darkness. Feed in all fresh pastures, in valleys, and on every height. Easy will it be,

my mountains a way, and my highways shall be exalted. **12** Behold, ^vthese shall come from far: and, lo, these from the north and from the west; and these from the land of Sinim.

13 ^wSing, O heavens; and be joyful, O earth; and break forth into singing, O mountains: for the LORD hath com-

forted his people, and will have mercy upon his afflicted. **14** ^xBut Zion said, The LORD hath forsaken me, and my LORD hath forgotten me. **15** ^yCan a woman forget her sucking child, ^zthat she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, ^ayet will I not forget thee. **16** Behold,

^v Chapter 43. 5, 6.—^w Chapter 44. 23.—^x Chapter 40. 27.—^y Psalm 103. 13; Malachi

3. 17; Matthew 7. 11.—^z Heb. *from having compassion*.—^a Romans 11. 29.

as the Shepherd of souls, for Messiah to gather to his fold every one hitherto straying, and bare hills shall then afford abundant pasturage. Spiritual manna and living waters shall be every-where at hand, together with protection from all heat and cold. The figures here so common with our prophet furnish a full storehouse of illustrations in the New Testament (see especially Rev. vii, 16, 17) as applied to practical religion. The promises of Psa. xxiii are here made universal to Christian believers.

11. Mountains...highways—Ordinances in the Christian Church conspicuously illustrate exalted privileges under Messiah. But there is implied by a change of figure here, that the disciples of Messiah become now, instead of quietly enjoying the luxuries of quiet and plenty, moving hosts or great caravans, over mountain passes entirely smoothed of ruggedness by their great Leader.

12. From far—He brings them from every quarter on their way to the heavenly Jerusalem. With fair reason these words are supposed to mean, from the South—symbolized in the queen of Sheba; from the north and west—Asia Minor and Europe, the chief nursery, for long ages, of the Christian Church. **And these from the land of Sinim**—Was this the name of any country east? Very difficult to answer. The Septuagint renders it *Persia*—*ἡ περσιῶν*—a good authority against the Vulgate, which renders it "south." This is scarcely probable, unless by the "south" is meant the southern parts of the great eastern regions. Without detailing the argument by Gesenius that China

a conclusion adopted by Alexander also after a thorough sifting of the subject, also by other distinguished scholars—Ewald excepted—we may likewise here rest (?) till other more learned philology shall differently determine the case. "Sinim," hence, is China; at least its westernmost borders, or a name given to the easternmost parts of the world known to Semitic people in Isaiah's times, perhaps as far back as 800 B. C.

13. On this coming of disciples to Messiah from every quarter, the whole creation is poetically summoned to shout a pæan of triumph. The subject of the song is, Comfort. The past and the future are joined in the promise, and those to be comforted are tenderly called **his people**. The blessings of the Messianic ages are summed up in the promise from first to last.

14-21. But Zion—Probably the literal Zion, after such a pæan or shout of praise that the Gentile world is seen rushing from every quarter into the number of the true Israel, or spiritual Zion. The literal Zion at Jerusalem (or the old faithless representatives of the covenant) says, **The LORD hath forsaken me**—The complaint is altogether unjust. It is not Jehovah's fault at all. Faithless Zion is the one at fault. She had broken covenant and driven Jehovah from her, yet not so but he still yearns for her. He desires Zion to repent and return to him.

15. Can a woman forget, etc.—The Lord's yearning over his children is far greater than a human mother's for her own offspring: impossible, therefore, is it for him to forget the people he covenanted to save, if they also would keep covenant with him.

is intended in the word סִינִים, *Sinim*.

* I have graven thee upon the palms of *my* hands; thy walls are continually before me. **17** Thy children shall make haste; ^o thy destroyers and they that made thee waste shall go forth of thee.

18 ^a Lift up thine eyes round about, and behold: all these ^g gather themselves together, and come to thee. As I live, saith the Lord, thou shalt surely clothe thee with them all, ^d as with an ornament, and bind them on *thee*, as a bride *doeth*. **19** For thy waste and thy desolate places, and the land of thy destruc-

tion, ^e shall even now be too narrow by reason of the inhabitants, and they that swallowed thee up shall be far away. **20** ^f The children which thou shalt have, ^g after thou hast lost the other, shall say again in thine ears, The place *is* too strait for me: give place to me that I may dwell. **21** Then shalt thou say in thine heart, Who hath begotten me these, seeing I have lost my children, and am desolate, a captive, and removing to and fro? and who hath brought up these? Behold, I was left alone;

^a Exod. 13. 9; Sol. Song 8. 6.—^b Verse 19.—^c Chap. 60. 4.—^d Prov. 17. 6.

^e Chap. 54. 1, 2; Zech. 2. 4; 10. 10.—^f Chap. 60. 4.—^g Matt. 3. 9; Rom. 11. 11, 12.

16. I have graven thee upon... my hands—God's interest for Zion never dies out. The proof is, that the name of Zion is etched, or tattooed as a picture, on the palms of his hands, so is ever before his eyes. The figure may be derived from the ancient practice of branding the wrist, or other part of the hand, with the name of a slave's master. Under pressure of great temptation things often look this way, in all ages, to God's people, when they have been unfaithful to their covenant obligations. But God never forgets them till they utterly drive him from them. Zion's walls may be demolished, adversity may befall the Church in the majority of its members, yet evermore, for the sake of a faithful remnant, God's yearning interest to the few is not lost, and he awaits the return of the whole body to him.

17, 18. Thy children shall make haste, etc.—The glorious renewal of Zion, by the return of her children to God and his worship, bursts on the prophet's vision, filling him with gladness; while her enemies flee with as much of haste as repentant Israel returns. **Clothe thee with them all, as with an ornament**—Behold! from all around backsliding members are returning! and, God's oath for it, they all of them shall be as "an ornament," or as beautiful clothing, which Zion shall put on in token of her reconciliation and her joy. So is the Church always, when pure, spiritually bedecked.

19. In the import of verses 16 to 18 our Version and the Hebrew quite ac-

curately coincide, though the Hebrew is occasionally broken; as for example: **Thy waste and thy desolate places**—More literally, *Thy wastes and thy desolations, and the land of thy wasteness. Shall even now be too narrow*—So great should be the number of her converts, here termed **inhabitants**, that not only the more attractive parts of the land, but even the "waste places" should overflow with people. Not the newly built-up city alone, but all the land around, so long lying waste, shall be renewed in beauty, both of holy citizens and their substance and productiveness, just as in her former palmiest days when God was sole theocratic king: only no more hovering enemies shall, as of old, be around. They shall be **far away**.

20. The place is too strait—So full of happy dwellers this place shall be, that thy children, as they come to thee with sympathy on occasion of some lost one, shall say over and over in thy hearing, to one and another, "Give me room, too crowded is this place." Zion overhears this language, not of complaint, but of inconvenience for lack of space.

21. Thou—Zion. Shalt... say—Namely, to herself, in absolute wonderment. **Who hath begotten me these**—The bereft, wondering captive has become the spiritual mother of a vast throng, and she inquires in ecstasy, **Where had they been?** This paraphrase is not fanciful, but touches the text at every point. It well describes the astonishment of the hither-to desolate Zion.

these, where *had they been?* **22^b** Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people: and they shall bring thy sons in *their* ^aarms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon *their* ^cshoulders. **23^d** And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their ^equeens thy nursing mothers: they shall bow down to thee with *their* face toward the earth, and ^flick up the dust of thy feet; and thou shalt know that I *am* the Lord: for ^gthey shall not be ashamed that wait for me.

24^h Shall the prey be taken from

^h Chap. 60. 4; 66. 20.—ⁱ 8 Heb. *bosom*.—^j Psa. 72. 11; verse 7; chap. 52. 15; 60. 16.—^k 9 Heb. *nourishers*.—^l 10 Heb. *princesses*.—^m Psa. 72. 9; Micah 7. 17.—ⁿ Psa. 34. 22; Rom. 5. 5; 9. 33; 10. 11.

22. Thus saith the Lord God—In answer to the inquiry just put. Alexander renders the Lord's reply as follows: "*Behold, I will lift up to the nations my hand, and I will set up to the peoples my standard, (or, signal,) and they will bring thy sons in the bosom, (or, arms,) and thy daughters on the shoulders shall be carried.*" The figures here are much the same as in chapter xiii, 2, namely, raising and waving or shaking the hand to the nations far off and near, raising a pole as a signal, summoning to help in Zion's cause. The gospel is inscribed upon said signal. The nations understand; they rush to it; they bring back Zion's children, not merely backslidden Israel, but multitudes of wanderers besides. **In their arms... upon their shoulders—**Such figures are well understood in oriental life, expressing the tender care lavished on children by parents or by nurses.

23. Kings shall be thy nursing fathers... queens thy nursing mothers—This verse teaches that the principles of Messiah's reign shall take hold of all—the highest and the lowest. Affection for Zion shall be the profoundest conceivable. Monarchs, with their subjects, shall bow to Messiah; the former shall become foster fathers, and queens and princesses foster mothers, to the weak, poor, and lowly. The foster father or mother was, and yet is, to great houses throughout the East, a no inconsiderable per-

the mighty, or ¹¹the lawful captive delivered? **25** But thus saith the Lord, Even the ¹²captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered: for I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children. **26** And I will ¹³feed them that oppress thee with their own flesh; and they shall be drunken with their own ¹⁴blood, as with ¹⁵sweet wine: and all flesh ¹⁶shall know that I the Lord *am* thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob.

ⁿ Matthew 12. 29; Luke 11. 21, 22.—¹¹ Heb. *the captivity of the just*.—¹² Heb. *captivity*.—¹³ Chapter 9. 20.—¹⁴ Rev. 14. 20; 16. 6.—¹⁵ Or, *new wine*.—¹⁶ Psalm 9. 16; chapter 60. 16.

son. But in last results of the rule of the great Anointed, the heads themselves of houses and nations take earnestly to this service. The divine will is the tie that consentaneously holds all.

24-26. Shall the prey be taken from the mighty—An objection is logically started, but in the interest of Zion, and to remove the last ground of fear. Through the prophet God has promised the most marvellous things. From an earthly view they seem impossible. Can it be possible, it is asked, to take captives out of the clutches of mighty ones and bring them to Zion? **Terrible—**Literally, *giants* in oppression and tyranny; the "terrible" of the text. Already almighty Jehovah has arranged this. Every contender with him in respect to Zion will but overdo his case. "Terrible" he may think himself, and so seem to men of weak faith; but he shall be as the "terrible" one of Assyria, (chap. xiv.) overwhelmed with revilings in sheol—the underworld—on the walls whereof only the weak shadow of his giantship could be found. Contenders of such sort, terrible and cruel, and permitted to be unconquerable for a mere day, are sent by Jehovah to their doom of discords and internal strifes, wherein they gorge on each other's flesh and blood, and by the law of retribution precipitate themselves to inevitable self ruin. Such seems to be the meaning of verses 25, 26.

CHAPTER L.

THUS saith the Lord, Where is ^a the bill of your mother's divorcement, whom I have put away? or which of ^b my creditors is it to whom I have sold you? Behold, for your iniquities ^c have ye sold yourselves, and for your transgressions is your mother put away. **2** Wherefore, when I came, *was there no man?* ^d when I called, *was there none to answer?* ^e Is my hand shortened at all,

^a Deut. 24. 1; Jer. 3. 8; Hos. 2. 2. — ^b 2 Kings 4. 1; Matt. 18. 25. — ^c Chap. 52. 3. — ^d Prov. 1. 24; chap. 65. 13; 66. 4; Jer. 7. 13; 35. 15. — ^e Num. 11. 23; chap. 51. 1.

CHAPTER L.

Sec. 2. MESSIAH'S MESSAGE TO ISRAEL; chaps. l-lii, 10.

In connexion with the close of Messiah's message to the heathen in chapter xlix was a reply to Zion's complaint that she had been forsaken and forgotten. The subject is resumed, and the cause of the rejection is explained under figure of marriage infidelity, not, as Zion untruthfully and unjustly alleged, that she had been voluntarily forsaken or forgotten. But the warning and reproof herein given are followed by promises of very rich blessings yet to come.

1. Thus saith the Lord—As in reply to Zion's complaint, and in justification of himself. **Where is the bill of your mother's divorcement?**—In effect, the words are: "Your mother, or Zion, to whom I am married, and claim still an indissoluble marriage bond, has no such bill of divorcement, except as she has herself made it by departure from me. Consequently, her children are not chattels to be sold into bondage. Earthly fathers do this, but I never. The children of Zion may break away from me and sell themselves, but I am faithful to my covenants—my part of the bond—for ever. You are doers of these evils; your mother has put herself away."

2. Wherefore, when I came...no man—No man of you answers to my call when I come to my people. Guilt is timid, and shrinks out of sight. It feels condemnation, not confidence. Is this your case? **Is my hand shortened**—That is, cut off, and thus disabled. **That it cannot redeem**—

that it cannot redeem? or have I no power to deliver? behold, 'at my rebuke I ^a dry up the sea, I make the ^b rivers a wilderness: ^c their fish stinketh, because *there is no water, and dieth for thirst.* **3** ^d I clothe the heavens with blackness, ^e and I make sackcloth their covering.

4 ^f The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to *him that is* ^g weary: he wakeneth morn-

^f Psal. 106. 9; Nahum 1. 4. — ^g Exodus 14. 21. — ^a Josh. 3. 16. — ^b Exod. 7. 18, 21. — ^c Exod. 10. 21. — ^d Rev. 6. 12. — ^e Exodus 4. 11. — ^f Matt. 11. 28.

Cannot rescue and redeem my own when they stray and get enslaved. **Behold, at my rebuke**—God's kindly providence is always over his people, as against others hostile to them. Instances: the Red Sea deliverance; the retention of waters in desert wady-trunks, when winter is gone and summer drought has come; such as Wady Feiran, near Sinai; but other wadies become all dry, yet new founts are opened where not known before.

3. I clothe the heavens with blackness—As at Sinai, but I cause the terror stricken still to live, and lay before them my commands. Should not such a husband, such a father, helper, friend, be worthy of confidence?

4. This discourse is to his people yet in exile; but equally well it applies to them when he, as Messiah, finds them at his incarnation in Judea, centuries after their restoration to Jerusalem. **The Lord God**—He from whom goes forth the Messiah, and he in whom Jehovah came to his nation, a twofold mysterious relation, or interaction, of God and his Anointed One. The one speaking here, as is also shown by the words *me* and *mine*, may be assumed to be the *Messiah*, who is referring in these verses to facts pertaining especially to the incarnate period on earth, and generally to the ante-incarnate period during the later history of Israel. Chapters xlii, 2; xlix, 1. **The tongue of the learned**—One eloquent in what he knows, or in those things in which he has been instructed. **Word in season**—Words of consolation and hope to the sorrowful and afflicted. **He wakeneth**

ing by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned. **5** The Lord God ^o hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back. **6** ^a I gave my back to the smiters, and ^b my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting.

7 For the Lord God will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have ^c I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed. **8** ^d He is near that justifieth me; who will contend with me? let us stand to-

^o Psa. 40. 6-8.—^p Matt. 26. 39; John 14. 31; Phil. 2. 8; Heb. 10. 5.—^q Matt. 26. 67; 27. 26; John 18. 22.—^r Lam. 3. 30.—^s Ezekiel 3. 8, 9.—^t Rom. 8. 32-34.

morning by morning—Jehovah continually reveals to his Anointed what truths he should speak or reveal. Messiah is a learner, not in the way prophets become such—by dreams in the night and other ways—but through close-t oneness of nature, and in normal face-to-face communications. **He wakeneth mine ear**—Calleth for my mental attention, which is instantly given. This describes the way of Christ on earth perfectly.

6. I gave my back to the smiters—Spoken in reference to Christ's willingly-borne sufferings. His obedience was perfect. Psalm xxii, 7, and ixix, 8, find in this their perfect antitypical fulfilment. "He offered his back to such as smote it, his cheeks to such as plucked the hair of his beard." This was submission to the deepest degree of shame an Oriental could conceive of. See Matthew xxvi, 67; xxvii, 30; Luke xviii, 31-33.

7-9. But he trusts in Jehovah, and looks to the end with a sweetly-willing patience. No shame makes him faint-hearted. **The Lord God will help me**—Assurance of hope is assurance of faith for the long future. Except in the Divine Man, no such endurance, with its long waiting, is possible to be exemplified. **Like a flint**—He made his face as unfeeling as a flint-stone—the hardest stone known. Power of will to endure like this raises supreme admiration and supreme pity. **He is near**—That is, he who justifieth; who causes to be, and at length who appears before the universe *a just one*. This is

gether: who *is* ¹ mine adversary? let him come near to me. **9** Behold, the Lord God will help me; who *is* he *that* shall condemn me? ² lo, they all shall wax old as a garment; ³ the moth shall eat them up.

10 Who *is* among you that feareth the LORD, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that ⁴ walketh *in* darkness, and hath no light? ⁵ let him trust in the name of the LORD, and stay upon his God. **11** Behold, ⁶ all ye that kindle a fire, that compass *yourselves* about with sparks: walk in the light of your fire,

¹ Hebrew, *the master of my cause*.—² Job 13. 28; Psa. 102. 26; chap. 51. 6.—³ Chap. 51. 8.—⁴ Psa. 23. 4.—⁵ 2 Chron. 20. 20; Psa. 20. 7.—⁶ Jer. 17. 5, 7; Jonah 2. 8.

in antithesis with the next causative verb—to condemn. to make one a condemned man. **Let us stand together**—Adjudication is invited; the contender, or adversary, is called on to do his worst. Messiah does not fear. His mission is serenely to endure. But Jehovah is near, and on his side. His cause is sure. Righteousness will at length be pronounced on him. But the adversary will fail and vanish to naught, as does the rich oriental's wealth consisting of abundant changes of raiment which the moth preys upon and devours.

10. Thus far, beginning with the fourth verse, we have had the words of the Servant of God. The verses 1-3 were Jehovah's words of the import that the sufferings of God's people were the necessary fruit of their own sins. And now Jehovah closes with a warning to his people again, to the import, first, That if they who at heart fear Jehovah, and have had the spirit of self-sacrifice measurably like that of his Servant, yet have walked much in darkness, have had buffetings, trials, dishonour, and injustice, let them trust in Jehovah their Father, who loves and will deliver them; and will yet secure to them blessed victories. Unlike Jehovah's Servant, they suffer not a little from perversions of character of their own forming, for which the discipline is awhile all the sharper, but ought to lead to the greater humiliation before God, and to a more undoubting trust in him.

11. Ye...that compass yourselves

and in the sparks *that* ye have kindled.
 7 This shall ye have of mine hand; ye
 shall lie down ² in sorrow.

CHAPTER LI.

HEARKEN ^a to me, ^b ye that follow
 after righteousness, ye that seek
 the Lord: look unto the rock *whence*

⁷ John 9. 39.—^a Psa. 16. 4.—^a Verse 7.—
^b Rom. 9. 30-32.—^c Rom. 4. 1, 16; Heb. 11. 11, 12.

about with sparks—If any son of Israel is neglecting Jehovah his God, is self-sufficient, is kindling his own fire and walking by the light of it, even daring the perils of stumbling on account of the darkness which his own soon-to-be-quenched light shall occasion, then, be sure, God's own right hand shall send a doom heavier than can be imagined. **Ye shall lie down in sorrow**—Or in a place of torment, where there shall be no remedy. Vi-tringa, and those who follow him, suppose allusion here is direct to the Pharisaical party who at first listened to Christ's teachings, then rejected them, then murdered him. For all which their doom as a nation was precipitated in forty years.

CHAPTER LI.

From the habit of the Speaker, through the prophet, to alternate between warning the lukewarm and careless of Israel (as chapter 1, 10, 11) and comforting and encouraging the truly devoted ones of that people, it is right to suppose (as modern expositors now do) that this chapter is a continuation of the last. The Servant of Jehovah, or Messiah, is, as before, the speaker. He now turns himself from the branches of the people to be cut off, (chap. 1, 10, 11, Rom. xi, 17,) who say they are Jews and are not, (Rev. ii, 9, iii, 9,) who live in the light of sparks themselves have kindled, (chap. 1, 11,) to the true Israel now enlarged by converts from the Gentiles.

1. **Hearken to me**—This formula is used when there is a turn from one class of hearers to another. **Ye that follow... ye that seek the Lord**—The address is to those who fully observe the law, lead just lives, and de-

ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit *whence* ye are digged. **2** Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah *that* bare you: ^a for I called him alone, and ^b blessed him, and increased him. **3** For the Lord ^c shall comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste places; and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and

^d Gen. 12. 1, 2.—^e Gen. 24. 1, 35.—^f Psalm 102. 13; chap. 40. 1; 52. 9; verse 12.

sire entire approval from Jehovah. **Look unto the rock whence... hewn... hole... whence... digged**—Abraham, who was a selected block, so to speak, out of the original quarry of mankind. **The pit** therein was formed in extracting the chosen mass on which to build up the house of Israel. That Sarah is named is theologically of account only to connect with the "rock" figure, Jehovah's task in raising up a race from this father of much people, whose marriage life with Sarah was long fruitless, and called at length for God's miracle to bring the desired progeny. The mention of Israel is, too, a poetic help to the parallelism.

2, 3. **I called him alone**—Or, *one alone*. I called him when he was but a single person—antithetical to what now appears in his descendants—"a great multitude." **I... blessed... increased him**—The futures, here, are past tenses, made so by laws of Hebrew grammar, from following a past, or, in the words, "I called him:" rather, they are neither past nor future, but in process of passing from the past continually into the future, containing thus a promise continually under fulfilment. **Shall comfort Zion**—Kay says, "Zion is correlative with Sarah," meaning, probably, as Sarah was comforted, so shall Zion be. This seems an ill-weighted correlation, yet there is this truth in it: as Sarah in her degree or measure was comforted, in corresponding degree shall Zion so be; and this proportion gives great wealth of blessings to her. **Make her wilderness**—In exile times Judea was such a waste. **Like Eden**—The strongest possible expression of a joyful change from total barrenness to the highest pitch of fertil-

her desert "like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody.

4 Hearken unto me, my people; and give ear unto me, O my nation: "for a law shall proceed from me, and I will make my judgment to rest "for a light of the people. 5 "My righteousness is near; my salvation is gone forth, "and mine arms shall judge the people; "the isles shall wait upon me, and "on mine arm shall they trust. 6 "Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath: for "the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, "and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they

o Gen. 13. 10; Joel 2. 3.—h Chap. 2. 3; 42. 4.—i Ch. 42. 6.—k Chap. 46. 13; 56. 1; Rom. 1. 16, 17.—l Psa. 67. 4; 98. 9.—m Chap. 60. 9.—n Rom. 1. 16.—o Chap. 40. 26.—p Psa. 102. 26;

ity and beauty. (Alexander.) Genesis ii, 8, xiii, 10; and copied in Ezekiel xxxi, 9, where the ideal *garden of Jehovah* is the illustrative term employed. Wherein are also **joy and gladness... thanksgiving, and the voice of melody**—Rhetoric is quite exhausted of words descriptive of the cumulative glory of the Messianic work.

4-6. **Hearken unto me**—Another change; or rather, another stage of growth as to the importance of this glorious message. The great work of the future is the offer of salvation to all, not to Israel of holy inclination only, but to all the good and the bad alike. All Israel is summoned to learn the extension of the promise. It is here asserted that out of Israel springs the Saviour, and doubtless, (though critics differ—see Lowth, Gesenius, Ewald, Alexander,) the apostleship to the whole Gentile world. **Law... judgment**—See chap. xlii, 1-3. As there, so here, "law" and "judgment" are used in the sense of *the true religion*, yet to be everywhere firmly established, and the world to be filled with blessings flowing from it. **My righteousness is near**—Not in point of time near at hand; but in God's time there is actually approaching a realm of peace and purity, equity and truth, to all the good and obedient, but a sore retribution to all who resist the truth to the last. **The isles... wait upon me**—See chap. xlii. 4. The command to look on the unchanging order

that dwell therein shall die in like manner: but my salvation shall be for ever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished.

7 "Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people "in whose heart is my law; "fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings. 8 For "the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool: but my righteousness shall be for ever, and my salvation from generation to generation.

9 "Awake, awake, "put on strength, O arm of the Lord; awake, "as in the ancient days, in the generations of old.

Matt. 24. 35; 2 Pet. 3. 10.—q Chap. 50. 9.—r Ver. 1.—s Psa. 37. 31.—t Matt. 10. 28; Acts 5. 41.—u Chap. 50. 9.—v Psa. 44. 23; chap. 52. 1.—w Psa. 93. 1; Rev. 11. 17.—x Psa. 44. 1.

of the heavens—the sun and the stars—has respect to the impression they make of God's constancy as to his promises. The heavenly bodies are the greatest of objects; yet these, being created and limited, are sometime to end. Not so the divine promises; the true religion shall never fail. The things material and earthly shall grow old, die, and vanish from sight: but salvation and true religion **shall not be abolished**.

7, 8. **Hearken unto me**—Another occasion for a call to God's people, to "hearken"—that of need of fearlessness against reproach and persecutors. These, too, are temporary. **Revilings**—Remember Sennacherib. **Like a garment... like wool**—The play of the Hebrew here cannot be reached in English. The word "garment" (an old figure) is, in a short space, thus used the third time, and the word "wool" the second time. For explanation see chap. i, 9, last clause.

9-11. **Awake, awake**—The fervour of the message in the preceding verses passes here to fervour of prayer (abrupt and strophical) to Jehovah, as if a slight sense of danger from delay seizes the people in exile. They pray intensely for Jehovah to **put on strength**; that is, to exercise strength immediately in their behalf; to transfer them at once from exile to the promised restoration. **Arm**—The symbol of strength, or, as Grotius has it, *divinity*, of Jehovah. **In the genera-**

7 *Art* thou not it that hath cut ^a Rahab, and wounded the ^a dragon? 10 *Art* thou not it which hath ^b dried the sea, the waters of the great deep; that hath made the depths of the sea a way for the ransomed to pass over? 11 Therefore ^c the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy *shall be* upon their head: they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away. 12 I, *even I*, *am* he ^d that comforteth you: who *art* thou, that thou shouldst be afraid ^e of a man *that* shall die, and of

the son of man *which* shall be made ^f as grass; 13 And forgettest the Lord thy Maker, ^g that hath stretched forth the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth; and hast feared continually every day because of the fury of the oppressor, as if he ^h were ready to destroy? ⁱ and where ^j is the fury of the oppressor? 14 The captive exile hasteneth that he may be loosed, ^k and that he should not die in the pit, nor that his bread should fail. 15 But I *am* the Lord thy God, that ^l divided the sea, whose waves roared: The Lord of hosts *is* his name.

^v Job 26. 12.—^z Psa. 87. 4; 89. 10.—^a Psa. 74. 13, 14; chap. 27. 1; Ezek. 29. 3.—^b Exodus 14. 21; chap. 43. 16.—^c Chap. 35. 10.—^d Ver. 3; 2 Cor. 1. 3.—^e Psa. 118. 6.

^f Chap. 40. 6; 1 Pet. 1. 24.—^g Job 9. 8; Psa. 104. 2; chap. 40. 22; 42. 5; 44. 24.—^h Or, *made* himself *ready*.—ⁱ Job 20. 7.—^j Zech. 9. 11.—^k Job 26. 12; Psa. 74. 13; Jer. 31. 35.

tions of old—God's almighty arm in energetic exercise at the Red Sea is referred to, and the deliverance from Egypt. **Cut Rahab**—Meaning Egypt, or the fierce one. See Psalms lxxvii, 4; lxxxix, 10. **The dragon**—That is, crocodile, or Pharaoh. Psa. lxxiv, 10, 14; Ezek. xxix, 3; xxxii, 2. Verse 10 here directly relates to the deliverance of Israel from Egypt, and it furnishes argument for deliverance from exile in this prayer; and, were not these verses expressed in poetic and strophical language, such a prayer would seem an indecent haste. Not so, however; for the answer to the prayer is opened in verse 11 by the word **therefore**; that is, in case of this prayer there shall be *no* uncertainty. The remaining part of the verse is a copy of chap. xxxv, 10.

12, 13. Jehovah speaks as if grieved at such fear lest he may not fulfil his promise of restoration to Zion. It is **I . . . I . . . that comforteth you**. Not unreliable, mortal man, who is going fast to the dust, like decaying grass, and every such fragile thing. Note the comparison, if there *can* be a comparison, between the strong, eternal Jehovah, in the repeated "I," and man, a weak creature of a day. **Who art thou**—So easy to *forget* the mighty eternal Creator, who spread out the heavens and laid earth's foundations, yet so timid before a weak, temporary oppressor, (the king of Babylon, whom Cyrus overthrew, or others of his like,) perchance, not calling to mind the fate

of Pharaoh and all his kind, (of whom not a trace now remains,) in the past emergencies of God's Israel? The argument is, that such distrust of Jehovah's unchangeable fidelity to his covenant of promise and protection should shock Israel's good sense and crimson his cheek. Even dejection through long exile scarcely excuses the lack of trust, especially when Israel is just at the point of the deliverance which has been so positively promised. **Where is the fury of the oppressor**—That is, what does it amount to in view of the power at hand ready to crush it at the seasonable moment?

14-16. **The captive exile**—One bowed down under the burden of captivity, which may be general, but more likely is here local, the captivity in Babylon. **Hasteneth . . . loosed**—Set free. He is weary of the situation; Babylon is to him **the pit**, a prison. Possibly some were in a literal "pit," the dungeon, its floor filled with spikes to pierce the "captive" when let into it. (See Barnes, *in loco*, quoting Paxton.) The exile longs not to die in the pit or of starvation. The promise affirms that of neither shall he die. The command is, *Believe this*—believe it on the ground of God's almightiness. **That divided the sea**—The Red Sea. He led Israel through on dry ground. **The Lord of hosts**—Leader of the armies of heaven—the angels of heaven. **I have put my words in thy mouth**—Jehovah committed to Israel his servant, (or to

16 And ¹I have put my words in thy mouth, and ²I have covered thee in the shadow of mine hand, ³that I may plant the heavens, and lay the foundations of the earth, and say unto Zion, Thou *art* my people.

17 ¹Awake, awake, stand up, O Jerusalem, which ²hast drunk at the hand of the Lord the cup of his fury; ³thou hast drunken the dregs of the cup of trembling, and wrung *them* out.

18 *There* is none to guide her among all the sons *whom* she hath brought forth; neither *is there any* that taketh her by the hand of all the sons *that* she hath brought up. **19** ¹These two *things* ²are

come unto thee; who shall be sorry for thee? desolation, and ²destruction, and the famine, and the sword: ³by whom shall I comfort thee? **20** ¹Thy sons have fainted, they lie at the head of all the streets, as a wild bull in a net: they are full of the fury of the Lord, the rebuke of thy God.

21 Therefore hear now this, thou afflicted, and drunken, ²but not with wine: **22** Thus saith thy Lord the Lord, and thy God ³that pleadeth the cause of his people, Behold, I have taken out of thine hand the cup of trembling, *even* the dregs of the cup of my fury; thou shalt no more drink it again:

1 Deut. 18. 18; chapter 59. 21; John 3. 34.—

m Chapter 49. 2.—*n* Chapter 65. 17; 66. 22.—

o Chap. 52. 1.—*p* Job 21. 20; Jer. 25. 15, 16.—

q Deut. 28. 28, 34; Psalm 60. 3; 75. 8; Ezek. 23.

32-34; Zech. 13. 2; Rev. 14. 10.—*r* Chap. 47. 9.

—² Heb. *happened*. —³ Heb. *breaking*.—

s Amos 7. 2.—*t* Lam. 2. 11, 12.—*u* Verse 17;

Lam. 3. 15.—*v* Jer. 50. 34.

his servant springing out of Israel,) his "law and judgment," or the eternal principles of the true religion. See chapter xlix, 2, where it is said, He hath made his mouth a sharp sword, recalling Heb. iv, 12. For thoroughly preaching the cutting truths of God's religion the wrath of man is aroused. But against this he says, **I have covered thee in the shadow of mine hand.** He protects his truth by shielding Zion from harm, in order to **plant the heavens, and lay the foundations of the earth.** That is, forming the moral heavens, etc., and giving to Zion the greatest spiritual scope and rule over the hearts of men.

17. Awake, awake—Earnest address to Jerusalem under a new image, that of a man reeling as an inebriate. The city now is deeply stupified from drinking of the wrath of God, a retribution due to all nations who defy and abandon Jehovah. **Stand up**—Her punishment is just, but on repentance she may be restored. The vision of Zion just given is in strange contrast. She is now arrayed in robes of peace, and desires reinstatement in her old home. The *cup of wrath* is a common figure. Psal. lxxv, 9; Jer. xxv, 15, 17, 28; Ezek. xxiii, 31. The word **dregs** is now generally held to mean *cup* or *bowl*. **Trembling**—Rather, *reeling*, as through intoxication. **Wrung . . . out**—Better, *sucked out*—to the last drop.

18-20. There is none to guide her—There is none like Messiah to guide and lead. The sons of Jerusalem—namely, the priests and prophets—have lost character, hence ability spiritually to guide. Two things, or two classes of evils, have happened to her: **destruction** (*waste*) and **desolation**—**famine** and the **sword**. The state suffers the first, the people the second. Where are the pitying ones to give thee aid? Or, by whom shall I, Messiah, render thee aid? See Lam. ii, 13. The twentieth verse is a little difficult of interpretation. This whole passage is in the tone of sore lamentation. The twentieth verse, especially, dramatically exhibits people after nightfall flung out of the city (Babylon, we will suppose) for safety. But the gates become shut, and they are caught just as the hunter captures wild antelopes (such is the meaning) in a net which he fixes in the field, and into which he drives his prey. All this is the judgment of God upon Jerusalem.

21-23. Hear now this—It is the same speaker still, but the address turns from the picture of suffering to that of hope and promise. **Drunken, but not with wine**—Because she has drunken of the full cup of wrath she is now to hear what Jehovah in mercy purposes to do. God takes from her hand the goblet of reeling, the cup of suffering with which she has been drunken, and of this she is to drink

23 But *I will put it into the hand of them that afflict thee; * which have said to thy soul, Bow down, that we may go over; and thou hast laid thy body as the ground, and as the street, to them that went over.

CHAPTER LII.

AWAKE, *awake, put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, ^b the holy city: for ^c henceforth there shall no more

come into thee the uncircumcised ^d and the unclean. **2** *Shake thyself from the dust; arise, and sit down, O Jerusalem: *loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion. **3** For thus saith the Lord, ^e Ye have sold yourselves for nought; and ye shall be redeemed without money. **4** For thus saith the Lord God, My people went down aforetime into ^f Egypt to sojourn there; and the Assyrian oppressed them without cause. **5** Now therefore,

^a Jer. 25. 17, 26, 28; Zech. 12. 2. — ^b Psalm 66. 11, 12. — ^c Chap. 51. 9, 17. — ^d Neh. 11. 1; chap. 48. 2; Matt. 4. 5; Rev. 21. 2. — ^e Chap. 35. 8:

60. 21; Nah. 1. 15. — ^f d Rev. 21. 27. — ^g Chap. 3. 26; 51. 23. — ^h Zech. 2. 7. — ⁱ Psa. 44. 12; ch. 45. 13; Jer. 15. 13. — ^j Gen. 46. 6; Acts 7. 14.

no more. The oppressors of Jerusalem are now to have their turn at the **cup**. Jerusalem has had her deserts. Her subjects have long been captives under tyranny, both at home as vassals, and abroad in bitter exile. The time now is come for a change; she is to be delivered, and her tormentors to be punished.

23. Bow down, that we may go over—This refers to ancient captives, and in some cases subjects, lying closely packed face downward, and the conquering foe or tyrant monarch riding with a cavalcade of horses, treading on legs, backs, shoulders, and heads, as over a bridge, to denote absolute humiliation. See Alexander and Barnes on this verse. Here a figure of that practice is doubtless employed, but the actual thing oftentimes occurred anciently, and sometimes occurs in oriental life at the present day.

CHAPTER LII.

ZION'S FINAL DELIVERANCE, 1-10.

The same call, **Awake, awake**, (as at verse 9, in the preceding section,) is to Zion, or to Zion-Jerusalem; Zion as representing a redeemed people delivered to their old Jerusalem home. The scene is changed. She is not now addressed as a prostrate, stupified woman in Babylon, but as a gloriously-renewed community, and bidden now to intense arousement (out of her stupefaction) to hope and to high cheer as to the future. The scene is Jerusalem, and the representation is that of the grandest revival throughout the spiritual Israel.

1, 2. Put on...strength—Not *splendour*, (Gesenius,) but "strength," imparted through conscious union with Jehovah. **Beautiful garments**—Rather, *garments of beauty*, giving the prominence really due to the latter noun, itself alone expressing the intended chief thought, which is holy character; "garments" being the embellishments with which the character is set off. Such character the people of Jerusalem are assumed now to possess, and to have no further association with **the uncircumcised and the unclean**, who have already had too much to do with defiling the purity of Israel. **Shake...from the dust**—A contrast is here intended with the description of chap. xlvii. 1. Zion has long been a captive seated on the ground, clothed with sackcloth, and dust on her head; but she is now bidden to shake off the dust of her captivity, and to *stand* or *sit* in her complete freedom. **Bands of thy neck**—The Hebrew text is expressive: *Loosed are the bands*, or chains, which held thee in slavery; **arise**, and be at energetic work.

3-6. Shall be redeemed without money—As the Babylonians paid no price for Israel, so they shall receive none for her return. God punishes injustice all round. His people, long time ago, went down to Egypt ostensibly to stay only till provision for their families should be obtainable in their own country. And because Egypt unjustly enslaved them, God overthrew the Egyptian king and his hosts. Equally, without cause, the Assyrian

what have I here, saith the LORD, that my people is taken away for nought? they that rule over them make them to howl, saith the LORD; and my name continually every day is ¹blasphemed. **6** Therefore my people shall know my name: therefore *they shall know* in that day that I *am* he that doth speak: behold, *it is I*.

7 ^kHow beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that

ⁱ Ezek. 36. 20, 23; Rom. 2. 24. — ^k Nah. 1. 15; Rom. 10. 15.

also became the oppressor of Israel. **Now...what have I here**—That is, in the matter of remuneration to the Assyrio-Babylonian. On his part he carried Israel away unjustly, and cruelly treated her. Yet now these oppressors howl and rail at Jehovah for reclaiming his own with no offer of pay. Israel, indeed, was at fault, but not against the Babylonians. She sold herself to captivity, but this injury was toward God, for he had the exclusive right to ownership in her. The honour of Jehovah himself demanded her restoration without price, for she was sold for nothing; he had in return for her just nothing, except infamy upon his holy name. Because the desolation of Jerusalem for so long a time has been an injury to him, to his honour, he will now (verse 6) reveal his name. **My people shall know my name**—Whether he is thought of as *El*, or *Elohim*, or *Jehovah*, in each, or in all together, his name signifies the absolute, eternal, peaceful One, sole Creator and Ruler of all things. **In that day**—The day when his Jerusalem-Zion and her people shall be completely restored, historically and spiritually, these wicked oppressors and all the oppressed shall know, and my people emphatically shall know, **that I am he that doth speak**. That is, that He who promised redemption is now present as the true and omnipotent One to carry it into effect.

7. The scene changes here in Jerusalem, and the prophet represents the watchmen on the lookout toward Babylon, as if expecting what, in an in-

bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, ¹Thy God reigneth! **8** Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the LORD shall bring again Zion.

9 Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem: ^mfor the LORD hath comforted his people, ⁿhe hath redeemed Jerusalem. **10** ^oThe LORD hath made bare his holy arm in the

¹ Psa. 98. 1; 96. 10; 97. 1. — ^m Chap. 51. 3. — ⁿ Chap. 48. 20. — ^o Psa. 98. 2, 3.

stant they see, namely, the swiftly coming messenger on the distant Judean hills. Then the exclamation: **How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet**, etc.—The joyful expectation, now sure to be soon realized, is what gives the word "beautiful" its meaning. Glad tidings borne by any one, however ugly, makes the bearer an agreeable object. In this scene the message brought was the oncoming of the returning exiles to their spiritual Jerusalem. Figuratively, this verse applies to a glorious religious prospect in any period.

8. Thy watchmen...lift...voice—Watchtowers along the line are here supposed, on which runs, from one to the other, the shouts of the coming caravans. **They shall see eye to eye**—This means, that so near to each other are the watchmen that they all in succession see face to face, not only of one another, but also of the exile columns as they advance and pass on their way. Other explanations are given of this phrase, but the scene is one of poetic movement, and no other explanation seems so well to fit it.

9. Break forth into joy, sing—The scene again shifts. Zion is restored. Her exiles are home again. They are bid to break forth into joyful song, because what has been heretofore a word of consolation is now *an act* of consolation; and jubilee shouting is now the appropriate thing.

10. The Lord...made bare his...arm—As conqueror, Jehovah has effectually wrought deliverance, to which all nations are witnesses; and his salvation through Messiah is now

eyes of all the nations; and ^pall the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

11 ^aDepart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch no unclean *thing*; go ye out of the midst of her; ^rbe ye clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord.

^p Luke 3. 6.—^q Chapter 48. 20; Jer. 50. 8; 51. 6, 45; Zech. 2. 6, 7; 2 Cor. 6. 17; Rev. 18. 4.—^r Lev. 22. 2, etc.—^s See Exodus 12. 33, 39.—^t Micah 2. 13.

to be published and embraced as far as to the ends of the earth, and to all ages unto the end of the world. **The salvation of our God** is the glorious Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. This salvation is for all.

Sec. 3. MESSIAH AND THE GOSPEL, lii, 11–lv, 13.

Thus far in this chapter is treated the case of an exalted Church passing, step by step, through suffering and deliverances into the purity of the typical holy Zion; from this point the view is turned again to the “Servant” of Jehovah, through whom the prophet has seen the Church to be redeemed. The portrait of a suffering servant is here filled out in detail, as a side-piece (De-litzsch) to the liberation and deliverance of Zion-Jerusalem already just depicted. He has conducted his people through suffering to glory.

This picture is to show, not only that Messiah's earthly pathway, as our Mediator, is to be through intense, but voluntary, suffering, but also that it is in his heart also to suffer for and instead of, as well as with, his people.

11. Depart ye, depart ye, etc.—The language here is of high poetic scope, and though allusive of departure from the old Babel-home, from analogy with chap. xlviii, 20, yet the reference must be general. The renewed and cleansed in every age, and from every den of capture, whether Sodom, Egypt, or Babel, must betake themselves *away, away*, for so Alexander, following Gesenius, translates the words, and so St. Paul applies them, 2 Cor. vi, 17, 18. **Touch no unclean thing**—Not the slightest memento. Probably the returning exiles were all natives of

12 For ^aye shall not go out with haste, nor go by flight: ^bfor the Lord will go before you; ^cand the God of Israel *will* ^dbe your rearward.

13 Behold, ^emy servant shall ^fdeal prudently, ^ghe shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high. **14** As many

^u Numbers 10. 25; chapter 58. 8; see Exodus 14. 19.—^v Hebrew, *gather you up*.—^w Chapter 42. 1.—^x Or, *prosper*, chapter 53. 10; Jeremiah 23. 5.—^y Phil. 2. 9.

Babylon. Utter renunciation of things belonging to that polluted land was, however, only all too appropriate. **Bear the vessels of the Lord**—It is known that Nebuchadnezzar took away from Jerusalem all the golden service-vessels from the temple, and that Cyrus ordered their return. See 2 Chron. xxxvii, 18; Daniel v, 2–5; Ezra i, 7–11. The application of these words to ministers of the Gospel has no original warrant except as being secondarily very apt.

12. Ye shall not go out with haste, nor...by flight—As went Israel from Egypt in earlier history. This is but an illustrative allusion. The present redeemed Israel has matured to high and blessed trust in Jehovah, who is near to them, who is both before them and their rear-guard to protect. They have nothing to fear, and they may possess themselves in perfectly peaceful calmness. How true to the case of the sanctified Christian as compared with his earlier experiences. God is consciously present to protect in every emergency.

13. This verse states his career in terms undeniably generic. **My servant shall deal prudently**—Or, he shall act wisely. Coming from the bosom of Jehovah to redeem the race, he knows its condition and the means to recover it to himself. He will not infringe upon its moral liberty, yet he will institute a system all his own, but open to the free action of men toward him, to own him as their Saviour and King. And this shall result in his exaltation. **He shall be exalted and extolled**—He will, through results of his mediatorial work, be raised to supreme dignity, or, more specifically, *be raised high exceedingly*.

were astonished at thee; his ^avisage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men: **15** ^vSo shall he sprinkle many nations; ²the kings shall shut their mouths at him: for *that* ^awhich had not been told

them shall they see; and *that* which they had not heard shall they consider.

CHAPTER LIII.

WHIO hath ^bbelieved our ¹report? and to whom is ^cthe arm of the

^a Psa. 22. 6, 7; chap. 53. 2, 3.—^v Ezekiel 36. 25; Acts 2. 33; Heb. 9. 13, 14.—² Ch. 49. 7, 23.—^a Ch. 55. 5; Rom. 15. 21; 16. 25, 26; Eph. 3. 5, 9.

^b John 12. 38; Rom. 10. 16.—1 Or, *doctrine*? Hebrew, *hearing*?—^c Chap. 51. 9; Rom. 1. 16; 1 Cor. 1. 18.

14, 15. The more specific details of his condition follow in these verses. The prophecy concerning him begins in the *protasis*, (verse 14,) as an address, first to him, but passes in the *apodosis* (verse 15) at once to remarks concerning him, a change quite common with Isaiah when under intense emotion. **Many were astonished at thee**—The appearance of such humility in the Messiah when he should come is, as the prophet foresees, to be a marvel and an astonishment to the Jews. He is wholly to disappoint carnal minds, who look for outward signs of royalty. **His visage was so marred**—This is an explanatory parenthetical sentence, giving reasons for the astonishment expressed in the first words, or *protasis*. “Marred,” not from injury as yet inflicted by man, but from sadness on account of man, more serious (and almost terror-struck) than any man is accustomed to exhibit. Part of this, namely, low birth, poverty, etc., was chosen, and partly, it was from ill treatment of man in refusing him as the true Messiah; also from unrelieved sensitiveness at the guilt of the world’s sins. These were sufficient to render his aspect that of a burdened, wearied man. Men of carnal ambitions reasoned thus: Was the Messiah to be of this appearance? Could the Messiah of Isaiah, pictured as a man of greatness, beauty, glory, be so disfigured? What more astonishing! Verse 15 silently admits it to be even so, yet declares (*apodosis*) **so shall he sprinkle many nations**. And this shall be the greater wonder (Septuagint) to many. That is, he shall rain his grace of purification upon them. Reacting mercy shall close the mouths of kings from uttering scorn of him, lowly though he be, deformed

by suffering though he appear. For in even this, men shall discover more beauty and glory than ever prophetic words had revealed. By very reason of immaculate purity thus discovered, and of truth, goodness, and saving power, they shall see in him greatness in all dimensions far beyond the conceptions which prophetic words had shaped for them.

CHAPTER LIII.

This chapter continues the subject from verse 13 of the preceding chapter, but the representation takes another turn. Though clearly announced in prophecy, the Messiah (servant of Jehovah) is reluctantly acknowledged when, in the prophetic perspective, he comes. The new turn here consists in this: that he suffers a self-imposed humiliation, and that it is vicarious. He suffers for others, and voluntarily, not accidentally; neither by, nor on account of, his own fault.

1. **Who**—Who among this class of Israel. The question denotes a prophetic anticipation of a renewed lapse on the part of the Jews from a full faith in the true Messiah when he comes; and the “who” refers to this. **Hath believed our report**—Or, the doctrine received by us, the heralds, (chap. lii, 15,) announcing the oncoming servant of Jehovah, the Messiah, now sadly marred in aspect—this the lapsed ones of Israel will find difficult to understand and to receive. **Arm of the Lord**—A figure for that of which the arm is the symbol—the almighty power of God, (chapter lii, 10,) or the divine power inwardly revealed. The question is: Among whom is this taking place, and resulting in salvation? See John xii, 28; Romans x, 16.

Lord revealed? **2** For ^c he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: ^d he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, *there is* no beauty that we should desire him. **3** ^e He is despised and rejected of men: a man of sorrows, and ^f acquainted with grief: and ^g we hid as

it were *our* faces from him; he was despised, and ^h we esteemed him not.

4 Surely ⁱ he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. **5** But he *was* ^j wounded for our transgressions, *he was* bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our

^c Chap. 11. 1.—^d Chap. 52. 14; Mark 9. 12.—^e Psal. 22. 6; chap. 49. 7.—^f Heb. 4. 15.
^g Or, *he hid as it were his face from us*. Hebrew, *as a hiding of faces from him*, or,

from us.—^g John 1. 10, 11.—^h Matt. 8. 17; Hebrews 9. 23; 1 Peter 2. 24.—ⁱ Or, *tormented*.—^j Romans 4. 25; 1 Corinthians 15. 3; 1 Peter 3. 18.

2, 3. The point of view appears to be, when Messiah's sufferings are over, and he about entering into his glory. **He shall grow up**—The verb in Hebrew is, as usual, in the prophetic past. Growth has been from the first Messianic germ, (Gen. iii, 15.) till fully realized in Jesus Christ. Through all its history, the Messianic conception has been **as a tender plant**, nourished by Jehovah indeed, but very little by men. Its root, the root of Jesse, in itself was vigorous, advancing to the Davidic kingship, itself thus asserting herein its own type of ultimate royalty; then it retired long from view, yet still growing feebly as in a parched land—that of the impure soil of men's hearts. Except a humble few, men look away from him. He is not of their sort, their character. He is not their ideal Messiah; they do not sympathize with his *griefs*; they abandon him. **Rejected**—Literally, *ceased from men*. He thoroughly knows the world's sins, and its sicknesses, pains, calamities which come therefrom. But he finds few to feel with him. All repel him, turn away the face, despise him. But is this sufferer really the Messiah of the old prophets? So even the old Jews all interpreted till after the Christian era, when their interpretation was cited against them, and they were pressed in self-defense to change it. Even then some fair-minded Jews have continued to regard the passage as descriptive only of Messiah. More, however, apply the passage to the Jews as a body, now in a state of dispersion and affliction. Some hold Jeremiah, and others Isaiah, to be the person meant. These views are upheld by the weakest of arguments. Of course, also, all who deny supernat-

ural prophecy refuse altogether to see any Messianic reference here. But this reference is sustained by the sound sense of all candid interpreters and disinterested sensible readers. **Esteemed him not**—Undervalued him.

4. Another turn occurs here. Already it seems to have been implied that when, in the prophetic outlook, the Messiah should come, he would not come in the form or aspect expected. Now the confession is: **Surely**—That is, actually. **He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows**—It is, indeed, an actual burden he has borne—that of our sorrows; also, that of expiation for our sins. **Did esteem him**—Our opinion was, indeed, that he was, or had been, **stricken**. But struck with leprosy, as it were, for so the original may mean, or what was equal to the worst of diseases. He knew in his experience the suffering due to every form of evil. **Smitten of God**—Visited of God, and thus to be looked upon as worthy to be despised and rejected.

5. **He was wounded**—Either bodily, very much crushed, or mentally, broken in spirit. (Gesenius.) Gesenius refers it to the second; Fürst, in general, to the first, which is perhaps the true sense. The suffering for the most part is external, yet not without terrible internal feeling. The Sufferer dies under it, though an innocent, not a guilty, sufferer. In the nature of the case, then, it is unresisted suffering, hence voluntarily endured. **He was bruised**—Applied to the body, crushed; applied to the mind, severe inward agony is implied. **Chastisement**—A burden of woe, whatever it was, assumed to secure our reconciliation and peace. **Stripes**—Or, some-

peace *was* upon him; and with his ⁴ stripes we are healed. ■ ¹ All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord ⁵ hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. ⁷ He was oppressed, and he was af-

℥ 1 Peter 2. 24.—4 Heb. *bruise*.—1 Psalm 119, 176; 1 Pet. 2. 25.—5 Heb. *hath made the iniquity of us all to meet on him*.—*m* Matt.

thing analogous thereto. The nearest to reaching the meaning here is, to suppose marks by blows upon his person substitutively received by him for us. In virtue of these we are healed. The first severe physical act of suffering on the part of our Saviour was the scourging he endured prior to execution on the cross. The word "stripes," then, must be a collective term, (representing the first stage of his substitution,) figuring what he thus far had endured as our substitute. By "his stripes," as a whole, that is, by his sufferings collectively considered, we are healed, reconciled, and saved. Is not this the meaning of the second member of the parallelism?

6. The sufferings described in verse 5 were those endured by Jehovah's innocent and righteous Servant, such as he took on himself; and this voluntary endurance in our stead became the source of our healing. The confession still is, He actually suffered. We, the restored ones of Israel, see the case differently from what we did in verses 1-3. We also see that he suffered on our account. **All we like sheep have (stupidly) gone astray**—We have selfishly sought our own pleasure; have recklessly forgotten God's commands. This comparison is not unusual. (See Ezekiel xxxiv, 5; Matt. ix, 36; 1 Pet. ii, 25.) The statement here gives the reason for sufferings inexpressible voluntarily endured on our behalf. He suffered to bring reconciliation and peace. As a sinless one he did not, he could not, suffer our own penalty. But his sufferings were an equivalent therefor, in consideration of the greatness and holiness of his person. He suffered in full measure what became an expression of the punishment which as a race we deserve. In this sense the Lord laid

flicted, yet ^m he opened not his mouth: ⁿ he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. ⁸ He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his

26, 63; 27. 12, 14; Mark 14. 61; 15. 5; 1 Peter 2. 23.—*n* Acts 3. 32.—6 Or, *He was taken away by distress and judgment: but, etc.*

on him the iniquity of us all. He caused to meet in, or to rush upon, his incarnated self such amount of suffering as should express the fact or consideration of a suffering of penalty due to us on account of our sins; and this by the cordial acceptance of the Sufferer himself. The Messianic Sufferer became the ideal personal Saviour or Atoner typified by the great sacrificial system of the Old Testament. He became the antitypical declaration to the universe of an eternally competent vicarious sacrifice for the sins of this fallen world. The infinitely Just One hovered over (Hebrew, *לְיָ*, Greek,

ὑπερ) the unjust, (clear before law,) and meekly willed to take the required blow upon his own head. Still He became not a sinner thereby. He suffered merely *as if* he were the world's concentrated body of sinners. In undertaking to save, he encountered the power of sin and broke it; wrought ample expiation for sin, and connected therewith a new covenant of forgiveness for penitent souls. He made his sufferings vicarious, in that himself, who was not in his own person subject to death, did die unto sin as head of a race that was subject so to die.

7. **He was oppressed, etc.**—This verse expresses the treatment he received and his conduct under it. **He opened not his mouth**—The prophet observes the scene in perspective vision, and so uses the future in the words, *He will not open his mouth*. The prophetic past thus employs the future tense. The silence of Messiah under cruelties is, not unaptly, compared to that of the innocent lamb—a comparison much maintained throughout the New Testament. (See case of Jesus before Pilate.)

8. **From prison and from judg-**

generation? for ^ohe was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people ⁷was he stricken. **9** ^pAnd he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his ⁸death; because he had done no violence, neither *was any* ^qdeceit in his mouth.

10 Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise

o Dan. 9. 26. — *7* Heb. *was the stroke upon him*. — *p* Matt. 27. 57, 58, 60. — *8* Heb. *deaths*. — *q* 1 Peter 2. 23; 1 John 3. 5. — *9* Or, *when his ment. . . who shall declare, etc.*

ment. . . who shall declare, etc.—Among multifarious interpretations here, that which is least often adopted seems the best, (*Lowth.*) namely, Deprived of proper legal detainment and trial—the usual prior summoning of witnesses, according to Jewish law—who can have the requisite knowledge of his teaching and way of life in such a precipitate condemnation? The Hebrew preposition *mēm*, (English, *from*.) before the words rendered “prison,” and “judgment,” denotes the unjust privative fact, or legal right denied to him; and Christ’s own reference when before Pilate (John xviii, 20, 21) to the Jewish law of trial, adds force to this interpretation, which is further sustained by the following clause. **For he was cut off out of the land of the living**—And this with indecent haste; with no chance for a proper trial: all this, too, because he was willing to suffer for the sins of the people of Israel and of the world. **Was he stricken**—Hebrew, *The stroke was upon him*.

9. Made his grave with the wicked. . . with the rich—How circumstantial the facts in this verse! As if himself were a malefactor, he suffered and died *with* malefactors. But from the first moment afterward, not the indecencies common to malefactors’ burials attended his dead body, but honour in a high degree; *his* burial was most honourable. His spirit, also, (1 Peter iii, 19,) rose to more than its normal vigour; then body and spirit were reunited in immortal resurrection. **Because**—Here is a sudden change in the thought directed to a re-attestation of the sufferer’s innocence.

10, 11. It pleased the Lord to

him: he hath put *him* to grief: ⁹when thou shalt make his soul ¹an offering for sin, he shall see *his* seed, ²he shall prolong *his* days, and ³the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. **11** He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: ⁴by his knowledge shall ⁵my righteous ⁶servant ⁷justify many; ⁸for he shall bear their iniquities.

r 2 Cor. 5. 21; 1 Peter 2. 24. — *s* Rom. 6. 9. — *t* Ephes. 1. 5, 9; 2 Thess. 1. 11. — *u* John 17. 3; 2 Peter 1. 3. — *v* 1 John 2. 1. — *w* Chap. 42. 1; 49. 3. — *x* Rom. 5. 18, 19. — *y* Verses 4, 5.

bruise him—Notwithstanding his innocence. His bruising thus accords with the divine idea of permitting (Acts ii, 23) an expression of love through suffering, which expression Messiah alone is competent to make. The time of being pleased with Old Testament sacrifices is proleptically past, as brought out in Psalm xl, 6–8, (Lo, I come, etc.) But the time of receiving *reward* for suffering is now at hand. **He shall see his seed**—Love declared to the world through a suffering self-offering, is to reap fruit in a long line of spiritual children whose own deserved penal sufferings are offset by Messiah’s free suffering instead. **He shall prolong his days**—This he is to do in the great mediatorial *aion*—the period of the great Christian dispensation that is to follow—during which his joy shall abound more and more through the vast increase of redeemed ones coming into his kingdom. A fitting and satisfying reward shall this prove to be. The same idea is expanded in verse 11. **By his knowledge**—His “knowledge,” probably, of the eternal plan to save men; “knowledge” of the how, and why, and extent, of such a plan, possibly not fully contemplated till his glorification began, just prior to his priestly sufferings, and continuing to his exaltation. See Matt. xxiv, 36. Such knowledge was relief to those sufferings. He saw from the cross “the glory that should follow,” and in a sense was thereby sustained. In such case he could freely and joyfully interpose for a world of sinners with sufferings due only to them, and of such a character that divine justice and government might accept *his* suffering in lieu of *theirs*, and be in no jeopardy.

12 * Therefore will I divide him a *portion* with the great, * and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was ^v numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and ^w made intercession for the transgressors.

CHAPTER LIV.

SING, * O barren, thou *that* didst not bear; break forth into singing, and

^w Psal. 2. 8; Phil. 2. 9.—^x Col. 2. 15.—^y Mark 15. 28; Luke 22. 37.—^z Luke 23. 34; Rom. 8. 34; Heb. 7. 25; 9. 24; 1 John 2. 1.

12. Therefore—That is, for all this mediatorial suffering and work: for this whole victorious combat with the powers of sin. **Will I divide him**—Hebrew, *to him*. **With the great**—Or, among the great. The figure is, of spoils from great conquests, and its meaning as applied to a suffering Messiah is, that his victories shall be very great. The language is mixed with ellipses, and is therefore obscure. To arrange it into orderly thought is difficult. A fair theory of the course of thought in the verse is, that it runs on a line of glorious promise between Messiah, humiliation, and exaltation, just now to be entered on. Out of trial, suffering, and combat, he is to come forth victorious. He shall build up a spiritual kingdom that is to crush all other powers, that is never to be diminished, and is to be unending. And all this, **because**, first, he freely poured out his life, that is, his blood, for life is in the blood, (Lev. xvii, 11;) second, because he submitted to an ignominious death; and third, because he is an effective intercessor for men. The first two are already accomplished, and the third he is still acting. These constitute him a perfect mediator. The time when intercession shall cease is yet to come, and then he shall deliver up his kingdom with triumph eternally complete.

CHAPTER LIV.

In the fifty-third chapter, the conception of "the Servant of God" culminated in the individual Messiah, who is prophetically pictured as having expiated the sin of his people by the sacrifice of himself. Israel, too, is there

cried aloud, thou *that* didst not travail with child: for ^b more *are* the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the LORD. **2** ^c Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes; **3** For thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; ^d and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities

^a Zephaniah 3. 14; Galatians 4. 27.—^b 1 Samuel 2. 5.—^c Chapter 49. 19, 20.—^d Chapter 55. 5; 61. 9.

pictured as confessing the mistake of having rejected the true conception of Messiah. Israel—the spiritual ones, the men and women of true faith in the nation—is the *Church*. In this chapter, Israel is in a state, through repentance and faith, to enter into possession of the glory of the Church redeemed. Hence the sudden burst of the following exhortation.

1. Sing, O barren, etc.—These words seem to be addressed to Jerusalem, the true metropolis of the renewed nation, the ancient seat of the Church of the Old Testament. She is compared to Abraham's wife, Sarah, for her long-continued barrenness, and subsequent bearing of One through whom Abraham became the father of many nations. The true Israel, long deprived of genuine descendants, has now the ban of barrenness removed. Let her exult, sing in loudest strains, on occasion of the great joy which has come upon her. She has not, indeed, been entirely childless: but the time of her marvelous increase in this regard has now arrived.

2, 3. Enlarge...thy tent—It is now due that Zion be alert to extend her dwelling-place, her tabernacle area, in every direction. **Spare not**—Spare no pains, grudge no labour. Spread the canopy indefinitely; make the tent cords longer and tent pins stronger. On every hand larger space is requisite for the occupancy of her children, which are to so abound as to include populations far into Gentile lands. **Inherit the Gentiles...desolate cities...inhabited**—Cities far abroad, and long desolate, are to be filled with new people:

to be inhabited. 4 ° Fear not; for thou shalt not be ashamed: neither be thou confounded; for thou shalt not be put to shame: for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more. 5 ° For thy Maker is thine husband; the ° Lord of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; ° The God of the whole earth shall

e Chap. 41. 10; 1 Peter 2. 6. — f J r. 3. 14. — g Luke 1. 32. — h Zech. 14. 9; Romans 3. 29.



NOMADIC TENT.

4. **Fear not...not be ashamed—** Keywords to what follows. Childlessness was a reproach among orientals, and especially so among Jews. **Thy youth—**That is, in years when family barrenness came as a judgment. **Widowhood—**When sin caused thee to become bereft of Jehovah, thy proper husband. The figures here, of course, cover spiritual conditions. Defection from God is, plainly enough, the meaning. The times when this condition was very marked in Israel cover many periods during the monarchy. Backsliding from Jehovah was the rule among them; spiritual worship and fidelity the exception. The exile period alone was distinguished for the deepest and most radical reform.

5. **The Lord of hosts is his name—**Jehovah is thy husband as well as thy Maker, thy Redeemer, and the Sovereign of the earth. Barren-

he be called. ■ For the Lord °hath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when thou wast refused, saith thy God. 7 ° For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. 8 In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; ° but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer.

i Chap. 62. 4.—k Psalm 30. 5; chap. 26. 20; 60. 10; 2 Cor. 4. 17.—l Chap. 55. 3; Jer. 31. 3.

ness and widowhood—which mean dishonour for a languishing cause—are no more to be feared. Protection such as a husband with these august names shall give, saves utterly from all occasions of fear.

6. **The Lord hath called thee—**The Lord hath taken thee back again to the relation of a beloved wife—the closest and dearest of all relations. The divorcement has to thee been very painful; made thee consciously **forsaken**, and conscious of no true spouse at hand as thy helper; but it has brought thee to the deepest penitence. **And a wife of youth—**Once rejoicing in early marriage, but soon fallen and therefore soon rejected; but on account of thy repentance, the Lord receives thee back again.

7, 8. **For a small moment—**These verses continue the same course of thought. See chap. xxvi, 20, where the same words appear, and with same meaning. The period is short compared with the now unending reunion. **Have I forsaken thee—**Better, *Did I forsake thee*. For thy wicked deeds made it needful. **But with great mercies—**Now in this grand Messianic age; that is, the day of the everlasting Gospel. **Will I gather thee—**Will restore my people with fulness of love and blessing. **In a little wrath—**In an outbreak quick but brief. **I hid my face—**Temporarily. The wrath was *overflowing*, as many render it; exercised, perhaps, in the trial of captivity at Babylon; but it was of short duration; the Lord soon made his face to shine in approval on signs of utter abandonment of idol worship. In contrast with this **moment**, or *little time*, the divine kindness shall be **everlasting**. The divorcement

9 For this *is as* the waters of ^m Noah unto me: for *as* I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth; so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee. **10** For ⁿ the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; ^o but my kindness

^m Genesis 8. 21; 9. 11; chapter 55. 11; see Jer. 31. 35, 36.—ⁿ Psalm 46. 2; chapter 51. 6;

forced upon Jehovah was brief; the reunion is to be perpetual.

9, 10. As the waters of Noah unto me—And such perpetuity is as certain as the divine oath can make it; as certain as that the **earth** shall no more be deluged; the rainbow sign in the heavens being an eternal pledge thereto. Gen. viii, 21, 22. This is here alluded to, not only because the oath and promise had been made, but because it also had been *kept*. **Not be wroth**, etc.—Because the everlasting Messianic covenant, made between Jehovah and his Church, secures that; though the Church may often be persecuted and disciplined, it shall never be swept away. Other things, as **mountains and hills**, shall be **removed**, but God's kindness and covenant of peace—never. We are ever to keep in mind that the Church is the renovated spiritual Jerusalem. That shall stand, though of the walls of the literal city "there shall not be left one stone upon another." Matt. xxiv, 2.

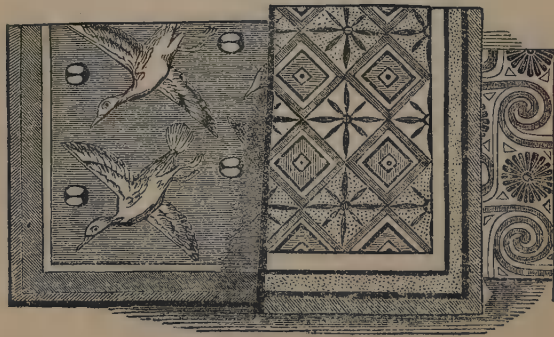
11, 12. Hitherto the Church, or Zion, has been a lone female, **afflicted**, or insulted; **tossed with tempest**, unprotected, jostled about, furious storms

shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the LORD that hath mercy on thee.

11 O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with ^p fair colours, and lay thy foundations with sapphires. **12** And

Matt. 5. 18.—^o Psalm 89. 33, 34.—^p 1 Chron. 29. 2; Rev. 21. 18, etc.

driving in upon her; but now, instead of ruined walls and torn-up pavements, a blessed spiritual vision is the medium in which she is to be seen. The **stones** of Zion shall be laid in solid gems of variegated **colours**, and of a strength and quality most precious and most enduring. The Hebrew mind revelled in figures of this kind to exhibit the future Church in her splendour, permanence, and power. Both in the apocryphal book of Tobit, (chap. xiii, 16, 17,) and especially in Rev. xxi, 18–31, the whole resources of rhetoric in this line of figures, descriptive of the glories of Zion or the New Jerusalem, seem worked to exhaustion. Beauty, preciousness, solidity, are characteristics after which the whole heart and understanding are put upon the strain to describe. **Thy windows**—Here so called because light is transmitted through them. The lexicons give other definitions, such as *battlements*, *pinnacles*, and the like; implying, however, some relation to the sun, as if the material they were made of was transparent, and so admitted the light. **Sapphires**—Gems translucently blue, and



TESSELLATED PAVEMENTS.

I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones. **13** And all thy children *shall be* ^ataught of the Lord; and ^rgreat *shall be* the peace of thy children. **14** In righteousness shalt thou be established: thou shalt be far from oppression; for thou shalt not fear: and from terror; for it shall not come near thee. **15** Behold, they shall surely ^ggather together, *but* not by me: who-soever shall gather together against thee

shall fall for thy sake. **16** Behold, I have created the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and that bringeth forth an instrument for his work; and I have created the waster to destroy.

17 No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue *that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn.* This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, ^aand their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord.

^g Chapter 11. 9; Jeremiah 31. 34; John 6. 45; 1 Corinthians 2. 10; 1 Thessalonians 4. 9;

1 John 2. 20.—^r Psalm 119. 165.—^s Chapter 45. 24, 25.

in foundations beautifully offsetting the azure of the sky. **Agates**, the same as rubies; and **carbuncles**, the same as glittering gems.

13, 14. All thy children—Dwellers within the glorious city, or, in literal terms, all who are pure in heart and love the communion of Zion and of Zion's Jehovah. **Taught of the Lord**—Informed and learned in the deep things of God. Jer. xxxi, 34; Matt. v, 2–10. **Peace**—Chap. ii, 4; ix, 6. **In righteousness....established**—In verses 13, 14, the plain doctrines taught are those connected with the mission of the Holy Spirit throughout the complete reign of Messiah. "Peace" is to be established on intrinsic "righteousness." Assaults, therefore, shall be unavailing. No cause for fear.

15. They shall surely gather together—That is, enemies, or opposing companies. Compacts shall still be formed against Zion. **But not by me**—Not by my appointment. I may not hinder—I may permit for a time. **Whosoever...against thee shall fall for thy sake**—The scene presented seems to imply that Zion all along shall still have opposers. If God permits these oppositions, the spirit and power of his providence is, nevertheless, against them, and their opposition shall be ineffectual. Many opposers shall themselves fail and go to perdition, they having first fulfilled a permitted persecution to discipline Zion's people, and thus strengthen their faith and fidelity. Others shall give up the strife and become friends of God: *shall fall unto thee: a sense many of the later interpreters adopt.*

The Septuagint and Vulgate Versions, and some of the Targums, vary from this interpretation, but not seriously nor at all essentially. Since this day the Messianic period has advanced more than 2000 years further in history, and the interpretation has thus become general in its terms.

16, 17. I have created the smith—Every instrument which is employed against God's people, as well as its maker, is in God's hands to overrule and to foreclose. **I have created the waster to destroy**—This means, that Zion's welfare is wholly in God's care, and every destroyer in war in the interest only of himself is equally and absolutely at God's ultimate disposal. "The smith," or *armorer*, who forges the weapon, and the warrior who wields it, are both as easily controlled as created. Man's free act, when projected, is in divine, not in self-same human hands, to be used.

17. No weapon....against thee shall prosper—An address of encouragement to Zion. No tongue entering into contest with thee shall prevail. Opposition, physical, ethical, spiritual, shall be discomfited. Such is the heritage of God's people—namely, his infallible promise, and his power to maintain and completely fulfil it.

CHAPTER LV.

Every thing in this wonderful Messianic outlook is now ready. The Gospel is a gift to the entire world. The promises in the preceding chapters are infallible. God so declares by asseverations plain and strong enough, and

CHAPTER LV.

HO, "every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; ^acome ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. **2** Wherefore do ye ^bspend money for *that which is not bread*? and your labour for *that which satisfieth not*? hearken diligently unto

^a John 4. 14; 7. 37; Rev. 21. 6; 22. 17.—
^b Matt. 13. 44, 46; Rev. 3. 18.—^c Heb. *weigh*.
^c Matt. 11. 28.—^d Chap. 54. 8; 61. 8; Jer. 32. 40.

he commands the acceptance of them in a way quite new to the experience of the old-time Israelites, namely, by a self-appropriation of them through faith. Through faith in whom? The fifty-third chapter, containing the central doctrine of the system, especially gives the answer. Israel's sin calls for atonement through a self-offered sacrifice of infinitely greater value than "the blood of bulls and goats." What can criticism that favours post-exilian authorship do with these chapters? If prophecy, as such criticism holds, is not supernatural, and is not valid except it speaks fittingly to the thoughts of its own times, then this exilian notion of authorship is utterly at discount, for these chapters speak neither to the epoch of Isaiah nor to that of the exile, but to the successively rising planes of Peter, and John, and Paul, and to the far ages of the Church still future.

1. Ho—A word summoning quick attention; a word of sad association and of eager joy: for the summoner is in evident sympathy with long-unquenched thirst in the crowds around. So feels God's minister who anxiously preaches the everlasting good news. **Waters**—This is a subjectively dear word in itself. We scarcely think of it as a thing by itself, but as relieving ourselves when suffering extreme thirst. So is the Gospel to a long-unrelieved penitent soul. Observe three points: 1) It denotes moral forgiveness, and as its consequent, peace of mind; 2) It implies superlative richness by connexion with the terms **milk** and **wine**; 3) And its main point is, its freeness and inexhaustible abundance.

me, and eat ye *that which is good*, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. **3** Incline your ear, and ^ccome unto me; hear, and your soul shall live; ^dand I will make an everlasting covenant with you, *even the sure mercies of David*. **4** Behold, I have given him *for* ^ea witness to the people, ^fa leader and commander to the people. **5** ^hBehold, thou

^e 2 Samuel 7. 8; Psalm 89. 28; Acts 13. 34.—
^f John 18. 37; Rev. 1. 5.—^g Jer. 30. 9; Ez-kiel 34. 23; Dan. 9. 25; Hosea 3. 5.—^h Chap. 52. 15; Eph. 2. 11, 12.

2. Wherefore do ye spend money

—There is remonstrance here against earthliness: making much of that which is of the least importance.

Which is not bread—Food to spirit, soul, and body. **Delight...in fatness**

—The Jewish idea of spiritual dainties. Psalm xxxvi, 8; lxiii, 5.

3. This invitation is followed by a yearning call upon every one to be a partaker in the whole mass of gospel blessings embraced in the **covenant** made with **David**; a covenant made first with Abraham, and renewed with David; a covenant promise of Christ in all his humiliations, and ending with a crowned Christ, a kingly Messiah, exulting in royal victories, and a redeemed, completely redeemed, Church.

4. Behold—God continues calling attention to the functions of the great Messiah. He desires the people—all people—to grasp the full idea of Messiah. **I have given him**—David, Messiah—type and antitype; David in supreme royalty, king over all foes and friends; Christ in ascended majesty, but dispensing to weak and strong, low and high, the rich blessings in full scope and adaptation which in his redemptive work he has secured for all who will take of them. He is a **witness to the people**—Better, a *monitor, instructor*, in all stages; then a *leader, commander*, and law-giver; originating laws and institutions for his "people." As to the idea of "people," be it ever kept in mind that no race distinctions are allowed; Jew or Gentile is embraced. This is the era of the Gospel, not wholly of schoolmaster training for the Gospel.

5. Thou—Thou Messiah, or Son of

shalt call a nation *that* thou knowest not, and nations *that* knew not thee shall run unto thee, because of the Lord thy God, and for the Holy One of Israel; ¹for he hath glorified thee.

6 ¹Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: **7** ²Let the wicked forsake his way, and ³the unrighteous man ⁴his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, ⁵and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for ⁶he will abundantly pardon. **8** ⁷For my thoughts *are* not your thoughts, neither *are* your ways my ways, saith the Lord. **9** ⁸For *as* the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

10 For ⁹as the rain cometh down, and

the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: **11** ¹⁰So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper *in the thing* whereto I sent it. **12** ¹¹For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall ¹²break forth before you into singing, and ¹³all the trees of the field shall clap *their* hands. **13** ¹⁴Instead of ¹⁵the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the Lord ¹⁶for a name, for an everlasting sign *that* shall not be cut off.

ⁱ Chap. 60. 5.—^k Chap. 60. 9; Acts 3. 13.—^l Psa. 32. 6; Matthew 5. 25; 25. 11; John 7. 34; 8. 21; 2 Cor. 6. 1, 2; Heb. 3. 13.—^m Chapter 1. 16.—ⁿ Heb. *the man of iniquity*.—^o Zech. 8. 17.—^p Psalm 130. 7; Jer. 3. 12.—³ Heb. *he*

will multiply to pardon.—^q 2 Sam. 7. 19.—^r Psa. 103. 11.—^s Deut. 32. 2.—^t Chap. 51. 9.—^u Chap. 35. 10; 65. 13, 14.—^v Psalm 96. 12; 98. 8; ch. 14. 8; 35. 1, 2; 42. 11.—^w 1 Chr. 16. 33.—^x Chap. 41. 19.—^y Mic. 7. 4.—^z Jer. 13. 11.

David; the idea of kingly glory in the typical David not being yet dropped. **Shalt call**—Or, invite and bring together. **A nation that thou knowest not**—That is, the Gentile world, whom he had not hitherto distinguished by covenants of blessing—the Davidic nation being still uppermost in thought. **Nations that knew not thee shall run unto thee**—Become one with the covenant people; run eagerly, on knowing of thee more particularly; as indeed, in early gospel preaching, they did so run. **Because of the Lord thy God**—And all this, because agreeing to the spirit of his everlasting covenant. Psalm ii; Acts iii, 13.

6-9. Seek ye the Lord—Now. This time of spiritual restoration, when God is more manifestly near than usual, is the best time, because a crisis time. **Let the wicked forsake his... thoughts**—Man's thoughts differ from God's in regard to his own character. He does not see himself a sinner as God does. Repentance is, therefore, an immediate duty. Other reasons are given in verses 8, 9.

10, 11. As the rain... the snow—By quick association of ideas, the mention of the heavens, in verse 9, suggests the comparison here made. "Rain and snow" fall "from heaven"

to water the earth, and so prepare it for its annual growths to feed the bodies of men and beasts. Just so, God's word falls from his mouth as fertilizing, to produce fruits of righteousness among the millions of Israel and of outlying peoples; and it shall not be void. For every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God is **bread**. Deut. viii, 3.

12, 13. The comparison just drawn (verses 10, 11) is truly beautiful, but its chief point is the energy with which the divine word is realized. (Delitzsch.) On receiving the word, or Gospel, ye are as those gladdened by a joyful deliverance. **Ye shall go out with joy**—Possibly the allusion here is to the exodus from Egypt, or more directly from Babylon, though neither can be the primary thought of the passage. The words are used as simply illustrative of the people of God emancipated from under old Mosaic tutelage into gospel privileges under the Messiah, or Christ. They go forth, bounding with "joy," for conquest of the whole world to Christ; and all nature—all **mountains**, and **hills**, and **trees**—take on the happy complexion of the buoyant spirit of the Church. The result shall be the world's renewal. The regenerating effects of the Gospel shall operate on the masses of

CHAPTER LVI.

THUS saith the Lord, Keep ye judgment, and do justice: ^a for my salvation is near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed. **2** Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it; ^b that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil.

3 Neither let ^c the son of the stranger,

1 Or, *equity*.—^a Ch. 46. 13; Matt. 3. 2; 4. 17; Rom. 13. 11, 12.—^b Ch. 58. 13.—^c Deut. 23. 1-3;

mankind. Evil shall be eradicated; a blessed civilization shall be built up: for these are what the prophet means in his favourite figure of exchange from the noxious and the forbidding to the beautiful and the useful in the world's physical aspect. See chap. xxxv, ff.; xli, 18, ff.; xliv, 23; xlix, 13; lii, 9. See also the Hebrew of the word *thorn*, נֶצֶץ, *na'tsuts*, only once before used, (in chap. vii, 19,) and therefore a genuine Isaihic word.

CHAPTER LVI.

Sec. 4. WOE ON IDOLATERS, chaps. lvi, 1-lvii, 21.

This section of prophecy reaches to the end of chapter lix. The earlier prophecies concerned Isaiah's times from Uzziah's last years until Hezekiah's recovery, when the prophet apparently retires from public action, and surrenders himself to the study of the prospects of the great future. His discourses on future times concern different sections of the future, though their scope of subjects extends vaguely to the latest cycles of time. These, however, are outlooks, sometimes for the occasion indefinite, but oftener limited, and developed in detail. The outlook of the preceding chapter advanced far into the gospel ages, covering generally the whole Messianic future. The prophet here (in chap. lvi) resumes an earlier section with a starting-point, as it were, in the age of John the Baptist, and specifically enjoins internal preparation for the gospel kingdom now opening.

1. Keep... judgment—Apply due criticism on yourselves till conscience

that hath joined himself to the Lord, speak, saying, The Lord hath utterly separated me from his people: neither let the eunuch say, Behold, I am a dry tree. **4** For thus saith the Lord unto the eunuchs that keep my sabbaths, and choose the things that please me, and take hold of my covenant; **5** Even unto them will I give in mine house and within my walls a place ^e and a name

Acts 8. 27; 10. 1, 2, 34; 17. 4; 18. 7; 1 Pet. 1. 1.—^d 1 Tim. 3. 15.—^e Jer. 1. 12; 1 John 3. 1.

shall be the only ruling authority. Advice and comfort are here administered. **Do justice**—Let the same authority rule in all relations toward others. In other words, insist on thoroughly ethical lives. This is the first requisite to a preparation for the blessed Messianic kingdom now at hand. There were many in John Baptist's time, silent and unseen, exemplifying this character; but the influential classes were sadly lacking.

2. Blessed is the man... the son of man—Terms meaning the same thing, used merely for the parallelism. The pronouncement of this *blessing* is for the consolation of those who "keep judgment and do justice." Sabbath observance is claimed on grounds ethical and physical. It is a perpetual obligation. Priceless blessings attend sabbath keeping and conscientious right doing in all things.

3. Son of... stranger—Any foreigner, or one not born of the race of Israel, yet desiring to embrace the true religion. **Neither... eunuch**—In Deut. xxiii, 1, the "eunuch" heads the list of those who are excluded from the congregation of the Lord. Why this? Because mutilation was, in early ideas, essential disqualification. So was the proverbial *dry tree*, or childlessness, a condition to the oriental helplessly reproachful. Of course, for the new era now opening, such a system of ethics was worn-out narrowness, and required revision. The gospel age shuts off none who desire salvation.

4, 5. A name better than of sons—The same subject is continued, and is especially emphasized. If any are to be excluded from true Messianic blessings, it is to be the proud, aristocratic

better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off. ■ Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the LORD, to serve him, and to love the name of the LORD, to be his servants, every one that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant; **7** Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: ^atheir burnt offerings and their sacrifices ^bshall be accepted upon mine altar; for ^cmine house shall be called a house of prayer ^dfor all

people. **8** The Lord God ^ewhich gathereth the outcasts of Israel saith, ^fYet will I gather ^gothers to him, ^hbesides those that are gathered unto him.

9 ⁱAll ye beasts of the field, come to devour, ^jyea, all ye beasts in the forest.

10 His watchmen ^kare ^lblind: they are all ignorant, ^mthey are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; ⁿsleeping, lying down, loving to slumber. **11** Yea, ^othey are ^pgreedy dogs ^qwhich ^rcan never have enough, and they ^sare shepherds that cannot understand: they all look to their own way, every one for his gain, from

^f Chap. 2. 2: 1 Peter 1. 1, 2.—^g Rom. 12. 1; Heb. 13. 15: 1 Pet. 2. 5.—^h Matt. 21. 13; Mark 11. 17; Luke 19. 46.—ⁱ Mal. 1. 11.—^k Psalm 117. 2; chap. 11. 12.—^l John 10. 16; Eph. 1. 10; 2. 14-16.—² Heb. to his gathered.

^m Jer. 12. 9.—ⁿ Matt. 15. 14; 23. 16.—^o Phil. 3. 2.—³ Or, dreaming, or, talking in their sleep.—⁴ Heb. strong of appetite.—^p Mic. 3. 11.—⁵ Heb. know not to be satisfied.—^q Ezek. 34. 2, 3.

Israelite. Outcasts of the worst type, if duly humbled, are preferred to such. Matt. xxi, 31.

6, 7. Stranger—Again, Gentiles throughout the world are more than urged and invited—they are made welcome with outstretched arms, if seen coming, even before invitation, “to the mountain of the Lord’s house.” Only a sense of penitence and spiritual want could influence their steps thitherward.

8. Outcasts—Equality thus declared, alike to Gentile and Jew, is no afterthought: not a new purpose sprung up from new exigencies in the course of history. It is found in the terms of the original covenant—“all the nations...shall be blessed in him.” Gen. xviii, 18, 19. Pursuant to this covenant Christ also said, (John x, 16,) “Other sheep I have,” referring to the original purpose that salvation shall be provided for all.

9. An abrupt change of the current of thought here occurs. The prophet’s bright prospect is checked, and he turns to things as they are in his own times. In the reign of Abaz, idolatry prevailed. Hezekiah, at the time of the great reform, caused the temple, which had been closed, (2 Chron. xxix, 3-36,) to be opened, when an outward improvement among the people followed. But to the prophet’s eye evil continues; beginning with Manasseh, idolatry and national infidelity return with fearful power. There are other views

held of this verse and what follows, founded on the Masoretic text, (one of which, that sustained by Birks, is exceeding fanciful;) but the majority of commentators agree on what is above stated. **Beasts of the field**—Some regard these expressions as denoting outside nations invited to make invasions on unfaithful Judah. More probably, they denote unspiritual teachers, irreligious guides, who, (excepting during the reign of Josiah,) disturbed Judah as long as its government lasted. **Forest**—This term is used simply to balance “field,” in the parallelism. **Come to devour**—Equivalent to, Ye beasts—meaning, the false prophets—do “come to devour”—this is your purpose, your mission—ye wolves in sheep’s clothing embrace every opportunity to devour the flock or people of the land. John, chap. x, borrows its illustration hence.

10, 11. His watchmen—The people’s teachers. **Are blind**—Can see nothing with a spiritual eye. **Dumb dogs**—An image from shepherds’ bad watchdogs, which fail to give notice of danger. **Sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber**—An exact description of the miserable, outcast curs to be observed, even to this day, in every Eastern town or city. They are nobody’s dogs, allowed to lounge about and greedily devour garbage thrown into the street. What a comparison! Such are the shepherds which the worldly and irreligious are willing to

his quarter. **12** Come ye, *say they*, I will fetch wine, and we will fill ourselves with strong drink; and to-morrow shall be as this day, *and much more abundant.*

CHAPTER LVII.

THE righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart: and ^{1a}merciful men *are* taken away, ^bnone considering that the righteous is taken away ²from

^r Psalm 10. 6; Proverbs 23. 35; chap. 22. 13; Luke 13. 19; 1 Cor. 15. 32.—¹ Heb. *men of kindness*, or, *godliness*.—^a Psalm 12. 1; Micah 7. 2.

tolerate. Each of these “blind,” “ignorant,” “dumb” watchmen looks to worldly gain, careless as to results on the character of his flock.

12. Come ye, say they, I will fetch wine—The canine figure is dropped, but the same sensual character in the religious teachers is kept up. Drunkenness is now the vice charged. **Strong drink**—On this, see note on chap. v, 11. The disgrace attending this vice among the clergy of this day and of this land is its rightful punishment. Any man who makes a beast of himself by habits of indulgence in intoxicating drinks, becomes a moral outcast in all good circles of society; but much more the religious teacher when caught in this vice. As respects such inebriates, it would seem from Jeremiah xxiii, 1-4; Ezekiel xxxiv; and Zechariah xi, that about the same estimate was anciently held respecting these characters as now. Objects of pity they are indeed, but of moral respectability, not at all. They are, however, worthy of all aid to secure their rescue.

CHAPTER LVII.

The case of the corrupt portion of God's ancient people is continued from chapter lvi, 9, throughout this chapter.

1, 2. The righteous perisheth—Under ministrations above described. Moral starvation stares them in their faces. Honest seekers after truth come to disappointment. **Merciful men**—Men who, amid general discol-oration of morals and manners, strive for reformation, find their efforts una-

the evil to come. **2** He shall ³enter into peace: they shall rest in ⁴their beds, *each one walking* ⁵in his uprightness.

3 But draw near hither, ⁴ye sons of the sorceress, the seed of the adulterer and the whore. **4** Against whom do ye sport yourselves? against whom make ye a wide mouth, *and draw out the tongue?* *are ye not children of transgression, a seed of falsehood,* **5** Inflaming

^b 1 Kings 14. 13; see 2 Kings 22. 20.—² Or, *from that which is evil*.—³ Or, *go in peace*, Luke 2. 29.—^c 2 Chron. 16. 14.—⁴ Or, *before him*.—^d Matt. 16. 4.

vailing. And they pass away—are taken **from the evil to come**—Spared from witnessing even worse things. **He shall enter**—Rather, *He entereth*. That is, pious men as a class. **They...rest in their beds**—Their quiet is to be found in their graves. Every one that walks “in his uprightness” goes to the grave in peace, with conscious sincerity in seeking, but with failure in finding, the path he desired. This under the influence of false teachers. Nevertheless God receives them, for (chap. xxvi, 19) “Thy dead...shall live again.”

3, 4. Draw near...ye sons of the sorceress—The Hebrew here is very emphatic: *You, you*. Sorcery is heathenism, (Fürst.) **The seed of the adulterer**—In the Old Testament, adultery is a word uniformly used for idolatry—so held, because the covenant between Jehovah and Israel was a marriage covenant. See chap. liv. God is the husband, Israel is the espoused to God. The address is here to the Jews in the plainest terms, equivalent to “let us look at your conduct in its true light. Scorners ye are.” **Against whom do ye sport**—Literally, *do ye make up faces?* Who is the butt of your mockings? See if jeer and contempt be not due to yourselves alone.

5, 6. More closely scrutinizing their case, the prophet puts it as it is. **Inflaming yourselves**—As near as can be ascertained from lexicon, grammar, and ancient usages in Palestine connected with idolatries, these words imply burning with libidinous desires; adulterous practices characterized the exercises of the worship of idols.

yourselves 'with idols 'under every green tree, 'slaying the children in the valleys under the clefts of the rocks? **6** Among the smooth stones of the stream is thy portion; they, they are thy lot: even to them hast thou poured a drink offering, thou hast offered a meat offering. Should I receive comfort in these? **7** * Upon a lofty and high mountain hast thou set ^h thy bed: even thither wentest thou up to offer sacrifice. **8** Behind the doors also and the posts hast thou set up thy remembrance: for thou hast discovered *thyself to another*

⁵ Or, *among the oaks*, chap. 1. 23. — ^e 2 Kin. 16. 4: 17. 10; Jer. 2. 20. — ^f Lev. 18. 21; 20. 2; 2 Kings 16. 3; 23. 10; Jer. 7. 31; Ezekiel 16. 20; 20. 26. — ^g Ezek. 16. 16, 25. — ^h Ezek. 23. 41. — ⁶ Or, *hewed it for thyself larger than theirs.*

than me, and art gone up; thou hast enlarged thy bed, and 'made thee a covenant with them; 'thou lovedst their bed ⁷ where thou sawest it. **9** And ⁸ * thou wentest to the king with ointment, and didst increase thy perfumes, and didst send thy messengers far off, and didst debase *thyself even* unto hell. **10** Thou art wearied in the greatness of thy way; 'yet saidst thou not, There is no hope: thou hast found the 'life of thine hand; therefore thou wast not grieved. **11** And ^m of whom hast thou been afraid or feared, that thou hast lied,

ⁱ Ezek. 16. 26, 28; 23. 2-20. — ⁷ Or, *thou providedst room.* — ⁸ Or, *thou respectedst the king.* — ^k Chap. 30. 6; Ezekiel 16. 33; 23. 16; Hosea 7. 11; 12. 1. — ^l Jer. 2. 25. — ⁹ Or, *living.* — ^m Chap. 51. 12, 13.

Under every green tree—Groves of terebinths, a species of live oak, were planted in localities set apart for idol worship and lust, usually on big hills, often the highest in northern and middle Palestine, where Baal worship was the most common. Then another form of this sin was the worship of Moloch, in the Hinnom vale southeast of Jerusalem. Children were here sacrificed, either by thrusting them into the furnace, or by slaughtering and then burning them. These extreme evils became most prevalent, probably, in Manasseh's reign, though from earliest time in that land they may have been more or less practised. **Smooth stones**—Either rendered smooth by rushing waters in the brooks, or by oil poured upon them when reared into altars. Did any exilian prophet write thus minutely of the scenery of hills, mountains, valleys, etc., peculiar chiefly to Palestine, and not at all to the level Chaldean plains? Difficulties of explanation arise mostly from neological interpreters trying to keep good this theory of an unknown prophet, and not Isaiah, as the writer.

7, 8. High mountain... thy bed—Places of idol and adulterous worship. Accounts of *dells* also, as such places are obscure. Groves in either place were doubtless sought. **Behind the doors... posts**—Namely, of houses. **Hast thou set up thy remembrance**—Perhaps inscriptions are meant, in allusion to God's command, (Deut. vi, 9,) to write the great words of their

creed, their duty also, upon the doorposts. The same was practised, it may be, also in idolaters' houses. Possibly, however, lascivious sketches, drawn on these "doors" and "posts," are intended. **Another than me**—For thy divinity. **Enlarged thy bed**—Of whoredoms. **Covenant with them**—Seeking safety under their protection instead of that of Jehovah.

9, 10. To the king—Or, possibly, to Moloch, as both words have the same radical letters, and differ only in vowels. If so, the meaning is plain. Or it may be "king," and refer to some foreign idolatrous king to whom suit had been made for aid, instead of to Jehovah. **With ointment**—Perfumery was in choicest request among oriental princes. **Debase thyself... unto hell**—That is, to the lowest degradation into which one can sink—the most degrading practices of idolatry. **Wearied in the greatness of thy way**—In this low service no wearing toil is too great, no sacrifice spared; with a zeal worthy of a better business thou dost never despond. **The life of thine hand**—Or, life enough hast thou in *thy hand*, never to weary in idol making; never to pine as in sickness. Is it not better to take "the life of thine hand" as denoting illicit gains rather than illicit pleasures?

11. Of whom hast thou been afraid—Much in these verses is very obscure, and this verse more than all. The question and context imply that

and hast not remembered me, nor laid *it* to thy heart? ^ahave not I held my peace even of old, and thou fearest me not? **12** I will declare thy righteousness, and thy works; for they shall not profit thee.

13 When thou criest, let thy companies deliver thee; but the wind shall carry them all away; vanity shall take *them*: but he that putteth his trust in me shall

ⁿ Psa. 51. 21.—^o Chap. 40. 3; 62. 10.—^p Job 6. 10; Luke 1. 49.—^q Psa. 68. 4; Zech. 2. 13.

there really was one or more who were objects of fear. But they were not such as would relieve from fear. Is there here an obscure reference to Israel and Judah in the times of Ahaz and Hezekiah? Much like this could have been asked in the past days of Isaiah. Look at chap. xxviii. The facts of that history seem prophetically paralleled along almost all the earthly life of the Jews. The Jews relied, not on Jehovah, but on earthly powers, to deliver them. One time it is Egypt; another, Syria; at another, it is Assyria. So through all their future, the same question applies. Not Jehovah, indeed, but weak man is carnal Israel's reliance. Is not this the key to the meaning, and are not the words following, to verse 13, sheer irony on the same line of thought? The description of life at Jerusalem in Isaiah's time, and long afterward, is put in strong colours, but the inward spirit of that life is not overdrawn. In the reign of Ahaz idolatry became rampant, even on the surface; in Hezekiah's time it was repressed, but not fully suppressed; in Manasseh's, it was outrageous. Josiah attempted to crush it forever, but it was too late. The proneness to idolatry in the nation could not be arrested—its onward rush dashed the nation to ruin. Captivity and exile alone cured the evil. A similar spiritual aspect, though assuming a different phase, largely appeared in the ruling class at Jerusalem in Christ's time; and so far forth this prophecy has continued application.

12, 13. About the whole case only words of irony can be suitable. These we have in verse 12, etc. **I will declare thy righteousness**—Israel's

possess the land, and shall inherit my holy mountain; **14** And shall say, ^aCast ye up, cast ye up, prepare the way, take up the stumblingblock out of the way of my people. **15** For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, ^bwhose name is Holy; ^cI dwell in the high and holy place, ^dwith him also *that is* of a contrite and humble spirit, ^eto revive the spirit of the humble,

^r Psalm 34. 18; 51. 17; 138. 6; chap. 66. 2.—^s Psa. 147. 3; chap. 61. 1.

righteousness was more than profitless—it was outrageous impiety. To idolaters the earlier words in verse 13 are fearfully taunting. **When thou criest**—That is, for help. **Let thy companies deliver thee**—Resort to your throngs of idols. Go to your allies. Nevertheless, wind and confusion shall follow. Your protector shall be like houses or dwellings when tornadoes sweep them away. However, tornadoes are not needed. **Vanity shall take them**—Lowth and Noyes translate, “A breath shall take them off.” But in verse 13 the humble pious are remembered. To **possess the land** and to **inherit God's holy mountain**, is to possess what covers the richest of blessings—generally, gospel blessings.

14. And shall say—Who shall say? The one who trusts in God, of the previous verse? This would be not in the costume of that verse. Better, indefinitely, one “shall say.” **Cast ye up...prepare the way**—The call is, to clear the way to give opportunity for the righteous to come out from among the wicked, before they are visited with judgment, as surely they will be.

15. For—This word gives the reason for “casting up” the highways and preparing them for the coming out of pious, humble souls from among the wicked. **Thus saith**, etc.—The prophet details the message beginning with “thus saith.” **The high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity**—Words the most descriptive of the incomprehensible God. **Whose name is Holy**—A name expressing infinite purity and excellence inconceivable; and such a being deigning,

and to revive the heart of the contrite ones. **16** ¹For I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth: for the spirit should fail before me, and the souls ²which I have made. **17** For the iniquity of ³his covetousness was I wroth, and smote him: ⁴"I hid me, and was wroth, ⁵and he went on ⁶frowardly in the way of his heart. **18** I have seen his ways, and ⁷will heal him: I will

¹ Psalm 85. 5; 103. 9; Micah 7. 18.—² Num. 16. 29; Job 34. 14; Heb. 12. 9.—³ Jer. 6. 11.—⁴ Chap. 8. 17; 45. 15.—⁵ Chap. 9. 13.—⁶ Heb.

yea, delighting, to be in communion with the **humble and contrite ones** of this wicked world! He loves to **revive the heart** of such, and to assure them for the present and future.

16. I will not contend for ever—The prophet speaks for Jehovah in *anthropopathic* terms; that is, in terms as if He, the Infinite One, does actually think and feel human thoughts and emotions, and so does sympathize, as no being else can, with man's spiritual needs, woes, and joys. He is able, in truth, so to represent the deity; but in doing so, the prophet's object is to make divine relations to human wants the more vividly felt. God deals trial to his people for necessary discipline. "But he will not always chide, neither will he keep his anger for ever, for he knoweth our frame."

17. Iniquity of his covetousness—The strong words that describe this evil are *rapine, plunder, prey*. Of these the Jews, in grade just above the very wicked, were guilty. **Smote him**—For these Jehovah disciplined Israel. Avarice and love of unjust gains were habits with the people. **I hid me**—Kept from them all tokens of approval. **And he**—Spoken as a unit—the people. **Went on frowardly**—They continued as before—sunk deeper into sin. The doctrine taught is, If removal of divine restraint is forced upon God—if he be expelled from the conscience, deeper into the mire of sin will men sink.

18. I have seen his ways—Man's ways. Either his ways of rebellion or his ways of repentance, it is uncertain which; perhaps both: the one caused God to withdraw his favour,

lead him also, and restore comforts unto him and to ¹his mourners. **19** I create ²the fruit of the lips; Peace, peace ³to him that is far off, and to him that is near, saith the Lord; and I will heal him. **20** ⁴But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. **21** ⁵There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.

turning away.—¹ Jer. 3. 22.—² Chap. 61. 2.—³ a Heb. 13. 15.—⁴ b Acts 2. 39; Eph. 2. 17.—⁵ c Job 15. 20; Prov. 4. 16.—⁶ d Chap. 48. 22.

the other, to return it. God is merciful, and **will heal** on sincere repentance. When backslidings are healed, then divine guidance and comfort follow. **To his mourners**—Repenting Israel is meant. He accounts them as "mourners," and imparts healing and consolation.

19. I create the fruit of the lips—The language of expressive penitence and grateful praise. These are said to come from God as a consequence of this healing, which he doeth. **Peace, peace**—He lays striking emphasis on the word *peace*, because it is *real* peace, in contrast with that heretofore promised by the false prophets. **To him that is far off**—This refers to the dispersed of Israel; possibly, the converted Gentile is also included: both classes, from this time on, are under gospel influences.

20, 21. But the wicked—The incorrigible, the rejected of Israel—type of the wicked, always and everywhere—have *no peace* at all. **Like the troubled sea**—The symbol of perpetual heart-disturbance, turbid with mire from its shore deposits. **No peace**—Fearfully decisive is this! **No peace, saith my God**—And saith, also, my inmost spirit, my deepest convictions, divinely awakened within me. **To the wicked**—Who have sealed their own condition of everlasting unrest.

CHAPTER LVIII.

Sec. 5. SENTENCE ON FORMALISM.

From the time of the close of the captivity at Babylon direct idol-worship almost wholly disappeared. But

CHAPTER LVIII.

CRY ¹aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins. **2** Yet they seek me daily, and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinance of their God: they ask of me the ordinances of justice; they take delight in approaching to God.

¹ Heb. *with the throat*.—^a Malachi 3, 14.
² Leviticus 16, 29, 31; 23, 27.—² Or, *things wherewith ye grieve others*. Hebrew,

self-righteous formalism, another grievous evil, more subtle in its nature, set in, and reached its height when our Lord began his ministry. (Birks.) To all the phases of the Jewish people, from his own times to the times of Christ, the prophet Isaiah applied his instructions and predictions. His outlook in the following chapter seems aptly to light upon the state of things as seen by John Baptist. The theory that Isaiah lived in quiet in his latest years, and wrote his prophecies for private instruction, chiefly to his disciples, and for preservation in the archives of his school at Jerusalem, does not hinder our supposing he wrote on the spur of occasions, as with prophetic eye he saw them transpiring during the public life of the people. Dr. Kay, of the "Speaker's Commentary," a writer specially observant of the part which different sections in this book play in the Jewish ritual, regards this and the 59th chapter as suited to the occasion of the great day of atonement. He says: "The promise of reconciliation was made in chap. lvii, 15-19. The present chapter stands like a *homily* for the day of atonement, (see verse 3,) while the *confession* suited for that day follows in chap. lix."

1, 2. Cry aloud—Literally, with open, full throat. It is an alarm-cry that is called for, against sins common, indeed, in the prophet's time, but peculiarly common just as the Messiah's advent approaches. **Spare not**—Lay on reproach without stint or reserve. **Lift up...like a trumpet**—Earnestly show up Jewish iniquities to the extreme end, notwithstanding they pretend to be very religious. **They**

3 ^aWherefore have we fasted, *say they*, and thou seest not? *wherefore* have we ^bafflicted our soul, and thou takest no knowledge? Behold, in the day of your fast ye find pleasure, and exact all your ²labours. **4** ^cBehold, ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness: ³ye shall not fast as *ye do this day*, to make your voice to be heard on high. **5** Is it ^dsuch a fast

griefs.—^c 1 Kings 21, 9, 12, 13.—³ Or, *ye fast not as this day*.—^d Zechariah 7, 5.

seek me daily—They make ado about it; pretend great delight in **justice**, as if they were indeed a righteous **nation**; as if their professed **delight in approaching God** were real.

3, 4. Wherefore have we fasted, (say they,) and thou seest not—They turn to complaining of God. He does not honour their work-righteousness; does not see it; gives it no attention. The answer is, Ye deserve it not. While pretending solemn devotion, **ye exact all your labours**—*Your grievous tasks*. (Gesenius.) Ye do all this for gain. Your devotion to me is all hypocrisy. More than this: **ye fast for strife**—Your fasting and self-imposed inflictions make you no better. All of it, with the spirit you have, renders you contentious. **And...smite with the fist of wickedness**. Exod. xxi, 18. Your servants suffer by your fasting. This requires you to be mild, patient to all, and humble before all. Nerves rasped by abstinence should be better under control. Your fasting is an offence "I cannot away with." Isa. i, 11-15.

5-7. Is it such a fast—That is, the one chosen fast which I have appointed through my servant Moses? Only the fast connected with the day of atonement had been thus duly appointed. With this annual great day of atonement were prescribed many and various ceremonial duties, all having symbolic importance, not needful to be here defined. At various times in the history of Israel other fasts were established, especially from the time of the exile onward. With classes of Jews who affected much religiousness, fasting became merely an outward asceticism, and this is what

that I have chosen? ⁴ a day for a man to afflict his soul? *is it* to bow down his head as a bulrush, and ⁵ to spread sackcloth and ashes *under him*? wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the LORD? **6** *Is not this the fast that I have chosen?* to loose the bands of wickedness, ⁷ to undo ⁸ the heavy burdens, and ⁹ to let the ¹⁰ oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? **7** *Is it not* ¹ to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are ² cast out to thy house? ³ when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from ¹ thine own flesh?

8 ¹ Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; ² the glory of the LORD ³ shall be thy rearward. **9** Then

^e Lev. 16. 29.—⁴ Or, *to afflict his soul for a day.*—^f Esth. 4. 3; Job 2. 8; Dan. 9. 3; Jonah 3. 6.—^g Neh. 5. 10-12.—⁵ Heb. *the bundles of the yoke.*—^h Jer. 24. 9.—⁶ Heb. *broken.*—ⁱ Ezek. 18. 7, 16; Matt. 23. 35.—⁷ Or, *afflicted.*—^k Job 31. 19.

is here condemned. The moral intent of a fast is expressed by the deepest humiliation, penitence, a whole self-surrender to God, heart-felt love for others, and a round of sincerely compassionate acts such as the wants of our fellow men call for. For the lack of these the prophet characterizes the fasting of his times, and of times foreseen far into the future, as dumb show and hypocrisy. The kind of pretended humiliation he condemns does not tend to radical reformation of life. This demands that they should **loose the bands of wickedness**, and **undo heavy burdens**: or, in other words, should cease to be unjust to debtors and others. **Break every yoke**, etc.—That is, the manumission of slaves, (Lev. xxv,) and the cessation of every sort of oppressiveness, etc. See Jer. xxxiv, 8-22. The kind of character required before God embraces, moreover, forgiveness of enemies, unfeigned sympathy with sufferers, and pure, general beneficence.

8. The blessings here mentioned follow true obedience. **Thy light**—Spiritual light, in which the obedient walk, is as the hopeful morning dawn. **Health...spring forth**—Thy spiritual growth shall be rapid. **Thy righteousness**—Abstract for the concrete,

shalt thou call, and the LORD shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and ⁹ speaking vanity; **10** And *if* ¹ thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness *be* as the noonday: **11** And the LORD shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in ² drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters ³ fail not. **12** And *they that shall be* of thee ¹ shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, *The repairer of the breach*, The restorer of paths to dwell in.

13 If ¹ thou turn away thy foot from

^l Genesis 29. 14; Neh. 5. 5.—^m Job 11. 17.—ⁿ Exod. 14. 19; chap. 52. 12.—³ Heb. *shall gather thee up.*—^o Psal. 12. 2.—^p Verse 7; Deut. 15. 7; Psal. 41. 1.—⁹ Heb. *droughts.*—¹⁰ Heb. *lie, or, deceive.*—^q Ch. 61. 4.—^r Ch. 56. 2; Neh. 13. 15, 22; Jer. 17. 21, 27.

much as St. Paul uses the word in Romans; sometimes a moral rightness of character, leading one to do what pleases God; sometimes, thy Righteous One, who justifies, shall go before thee.

9. Then—On ceasing to oppress, and engaging in works of kindness and helpfulness. **Call...answer**—The one party having the confidence to “call,” and the other both the disposition and legally the power to “answer,” seeing that right actions proceeding from right motives had taken the place of wrong ones.

10, 11. If thou draw out thy soul—Not merely imparting needed assistance, but doing heartily the sentiment of verses 7, 8. Readiness to do acts of love to others makes God ready to dispense richly in return. **Make fat thy bones**—Or, increase thy strength.

12. Build the old waste places—The beautiful figures used here are unsurpassable. The prose of it is, Thy children or posterity shall inherit your renewed character, and build up Zion in the far future, and in and through them, thyself shall be called **the repairer of the breach**, so fearfully made in the spiritual Zion. **The restorer of paths**—That is, the old

the sabbath, *from* doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking *thine own words*: **14** * Then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to 'ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: "for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken *it*.

CHAPTER LIX.

BEHOLD, the Lord's hand is not ^ashortened, that it cannot save;

^a Job 22, 26. — ^t Deut. 32, 13; 33, 29. — ^u Chap. 1, 26; 40, 5; Micah 4, 4. — ^a Num. 11, 23; chap. 50, 2. — ^l Or, *have made him hide*.

paths. Jer. vi, 16. **To dwell in**—The figure relates, most likely, to the demoralized Jerusalem which, on the return from Babylon, is to be rebuilt, and its streets and walks restored.

13, 14. To the foregoing duties of love is added the duty of sabbath observance. See chap. liv, 2, 4. For preserving the unity of a theocratic nation this was a *vital* duty. It is singled out here from other commands (Exod. xx) to represent the whole first table of the decalogue. **If thou turn away thy foot**—Namely, from walking in its usual paths—from pursuing its customary avocations. **From doing thy pleasure**—That in which thou usually delightest, and lovest. A lesson of self-denial for God's sake. **And call the sabbath a delight**—Under the Old Testament dispensation, the holy observance of the weekly "sabbath" was one of the most significant marks of a God-fearing people. Such, and none else, would term the "sabbath a delight." To the irreligious it would, because of its largely enforced abstinence from mere secular pursuits, be a day of weariness rather than of delight. **Cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth**—"High places" stand for security: hence, fortresses were usually built on elevated ground. Metaphorically, then, the expression denotes a position of safety and honour. To such exaltation would God raise his people, if trustful in him, and honouring his holy laws.

neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: **2** But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins ¹have hid *his* face from you, that he will not hear. **3** For ^byour hands are defiled with blood, and your fingers with iniquity; your lips have spoken lies, your tongue hath muttered perverseness. **4** None calleth for justice, nor *any* pleadeth for truth: they trust in vanity, and speak lies; ^cthey conceive mischief, and bring forth iniquity. **5** They hatch ²cockatrice's eggs, and weave the spider's web: he that eateth of their eggs dieth, and ³that which is crushed breaketh out into a viper.

^b Chap. 1, 15. — ^c Job 15, 35; Psalm 7, 14. — ² Or, *adder's*. — ³ Or, *that which is sprinkled* is as if *there brake out a viper*.

CHAPTER LIX.

Sec. 6. REBUKE OF AND PROMISE TO ISRAEL.

The reproach of God's sinning people, which was opened in chap. lviii, is here still more directly exposed.

1, 2. **Behold**—An ellipsis, as if omitting a short parley. And the prophet impliedly answers with emphasis, "No! Far from it." **The Lord's hand is not shortened... ear heavy**—The shortening the hand is here a figure indicative of the loss of vital energy, as heaviness of the ear is of lessening in quickness of mental perception. Neither of these can apply to "the Lord," who is the same "yesterday, to-day, and forever," in the perfection of all his attributes. The fault, if any, must therefore be elsewhere. **Your iniquities... your sins**, have made it impossible for Jehovah to save you.

3, 4. **Hands... fingers... lips**—The sins of Israel are sins of deed and word, by which accusation is to be found in every organ.

5, 6. **Cockatrice's eggs**—Hatched into basilisks, (see chap. xi, 8;) a fabulous reptile—its gaze supposed to be fatal, its eggs, as food, certainly poisonous. The reference is to a popular, not a scientific, conception of a certain not well-known reptile, and is employed to characterize strongly the people's evil works. **The spider's web**—An emblem of the people's acts of enticing

6 ^d Their webs shall not become garments, neither shall they cover themselves with their works: their works *are* works of iniquity, and the act of violence *is* in their hands. **7** ^e Their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed innocent blood: their thoughts *are* thoughts of iniquity; wasting and ⁴ destruction *are* in their paths. **8** The way of peace they know not; and *there is* no ⁵ judgment in their goings: ⁶ they have made them crooked paths; whosoever goeth therein shall not know peace.

9 Therefore is judgment far from us, neither doth justice overtake us: ⁷ we wait for light, but behold obscurity;

^d Job 8. 14, 15. — ^e Prov. 1. 16; Romans 3. 15. — ⁴ Heb. *breaking*. — ⁵ Or, *right*. — ⁶ Psa. 125. 5; Prov. 2. 15. — ⁷ Jer. 8. 15.

and ruining others. The further point of the figure is, that the "spider's web" is too gauzy as a covering to conceal wicked plans against others. Flimsy sophistry cannot hide pretended righteousness.

7, 8. Before this, depravity had involved hands, fingers, lips, tongue; now the **feet** are added. **Make haste**—Running and making "haste" to do evil. To indicate further degrees in depravity, citations are made from Prov. i, 16; and in both verses Paul (Rom. iii, 15–17) finds a fitting citation for utter depravity. Not only things they touch and speak of are polluted, but their ways are made crooked for working greater lengths of destruction. Corresponding retribution follows. **Way of peace they know not**—No peace do they have; no judgment, or, better, no sense of right, is **in their goings**; that is, along their whole pathway of life.

9–14. In these six verses the prophet includes himself, as he makes confession for the people, as Jeremiah does in chap. xiv, 19, 20 of his book.

9. Therefore—As the consequence of the foregoing. **Is judgment**—Or, real vindication. **Far from us**—We as a people are utterly undeserving. **Neither doth justice overtake us**—The meaning is, God doth not interpose for us. Note here, that the verbs are all of the Hebrew future-present, indicating prospective continuance of action. **We wait for light**—For di-

for brightness, *but* we walk in darkness.

10 ^a We grope for the wall like the blind, and we grope as if *we had* no eyes; we stumble at noonday as in the night; *we are* in desolate places as dead *men*. **11** We roar all like bears, and ^b mourn sore like doves: we look for judgment, but *there is* none; for salvation, *but* it is far off from us. **12** For ^c our transgressions are multiplied before thee, and our sins testify against us: for our transgressions *are* with us; and *as for* our iniquities, we know them: **13** In transgressing and lying against the Lord, and departing away from our God, speaking oppression and revolt,

^a Deut. 28. 29; Job 5. 14; Amos 8. 9. — ^b Ch. 38. 14; Ezek. 7. 16. — ^c Ezra 9. 6; Ezek. 5. 6; Hosea 4. 2.

vine favour. **Behold, obscurity**—No guiding relief comes. Same meaning in parallel member.

10, 11. We grope for the wall—Like the blind we feel our way. And the same or similar course of figures continues to verse 15, each illustrating some comprehensive phase in this confession which the people are openly and freely making, but which, in chap. lviii, it was boasted there was no need to make. Self-righteousness was uppermost in that chapter. Now it is confessed, "Moral blindness and darkness is our lot. Light and peace belong to the lot of the good, but to us it is the same as if we were dead." In verse 11 the figure is changed to indicate still the same bad state of the heart. With the insolence of a bear we growl; with hopeless sadness we moan like the turtledove. **For judgment**—That is, for vindication, (see verse 9,) for apology for our condition, but in vain. **For salvation**—For deliverance from this state; but it fails to appear.

12, 13. Our sins testify against us—Every page of our life history is a record against us.

14, 15. The section from verses 9 to 14, including first part of verse 15, culminates in a confession of a state of things fearfully bad in Jewish society at several periods of its history, but especially in the days of John the Baptist, of our Saviour Christ, and onward to the final breaking

conceiving and uttering ¹ from the heart words of falsehood. **14** And judgment is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off: for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter. **15** Yea, truth faileth; and he *that* departeth from evil ⁶ maketh himself a prey: and the Lord saw *it*, and ⁷ it displeased him that *there was* no judgment. **16** ^m And he saw that *there was* no man, and ⁿ wondered that *there was* no

^l Matt. 12. 34.—⁶ Or, *is accounted mad*.—⁷ Heb. *it was evil in his eyes*.—^m Ezekiel 22. 30.—ⁿ Mark 6. 6.

up of the nation, A. D. 70. **Judgment**—Equity set at naught. No magistrate could really avail.

15-17. The Lord saw it—Dramatic for the statement that he accepts the confession as he promised. Chap. lviii. 8-14. **It displeased**—Literally, *It was evil in his eyes*. **No judgment**—That there was no just judgment (always so dear to him, chap. lxi, 8) among the Jewish people. **Saw that . . . no man**—No man who executed justice and sought truth. **Wondered**—Amazed. He sees with dismay that no one is there to interfere or to intercede. **Therefore**—Upon knowledge of what was wanting. This passage is strongly dramatic, figuring God as a human supervision. **His arm**—Symbol of omnipotence. "His right hand and his holy arm hath gotten him the victory." Ps. xcvi. 1. His own equity came to the rescue.

18. According . . . deeds . . . he will repay—Dealing **fury**, terrible retribution, but only to the incorrigible. **To the islands**—See chap. xli, 1. To the western heathen world-power, Rome, embracing the world now or soon to be in complicity with apostate Israel in throwing down all righteous equity and judgment. **He**—The Eternal Jehovah. Review the course of thought thus far in the chapter. The points are: Keen self-reproach on account of sins; dark descriptions of characters on this head, followed by sorrowful confession and admissions of apostasy on the part of the great mass of Israel; the crucible of judgment is employed; worthless dross is rejected; genuine material is preserved.

intercessor: ^o therefore his arm brought salvation unto him; and his righteousness, it sustained him. **17** ^p For he put on righteousness as a breastplate, and a helmet of salvation upon his head; and he put on the garments of vengeance for clothing, and was clad with zeal as a cloak. **18** ^q According to *their* ^r deeds, accordingly he will repay, fury to his adversaries, recompense to his enemies; to the islands he will repay recompense.

^o Psalm 98. 1; chap. 63. 5.—^p Eph. 6. 14, 17; 1 Thess. 5. 8.—^q Chapter 63. 6.—^r Heb. *recompenses*.

19, 20. The interposing Saviour is on his redeeming career. Hitherto, that is in verses 16-19, in view of Israel's having fallen morally so inextricably deep, and because no one appeared as a helper, an intercessor, Jehovah enters at once into service for his recovery; his own arm is laid bare; he puts on armour for Israel's defence and upbringing, namely, **righteousness as a breastplate**, a protecting **helmet** for the safety of his head, and **garments of vengeance** for the onslaught in general against what it had belonged to all the appointed agencies in Israel's history to do, namely, to train the nation into the virtues of justice, mercy, truth, righteousness, etc.—just such as were essential to qualify them to be a holy nation. At the discovery of this condition of his people, he was struck with dismay "that there was no man" at hand: (verse 16:) "man," in the sense of a whole man, a hero, an "intercessor," who, as in duty bound, should have wrought to the attainment of the character required among his people. The right man was wanting. True priest and prophet were long past, and Jehovah himself now undertakes the cause of Israel. Verses 17, 18. In verse 19 there begin to appear some results of his interposition. The Hebrew (in verse 18) is complicated and difficult, but we obtain this sense—that, armed as he is with justice and salvation, **vengeance** and **zeal**, he carries out a general retributive judgment upon all adversaries, whether of distant "isles" or of inimical Israel—with the former especially,

19 * So shall they fear the name of the Lord from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun. When the enemy shall come in ^a like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall ^a lift up a standard against him.

20 And ^a the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord.

^r Psalm 113. 3; Malachi 1. 11. — ^s Revelation 12. 15.

and brings them to capitulate, and they become friends. **So shall they fear the name of the Lord**—Spoken of those who were at enmity with “the Lord,” and with his true Israel. “Fear” of God’s “name” is the suitable recognition of his claims and the reverence due to his authority. **From the west**—They of the west—all Gentiles. **His glory**—The “name” and “glory” of Jehovah are here not only parallels, but synonymes, as we learn from other places where the two terms are jointly and severally used to signify the manifested excellence or glorious presence of Jehovah.—*Alexander*. Chap. xxx, 27; xxxv, 2; xl, 5; xlii, 12. **From the rising of the sun**—From the east as well as from the west. It is curious, at least, that the local directions are here reversed. Usually the order is from the east to the west. (See chapter xliii, 5; Mal. i, 11.) This is the only note of time (if it be this) where the great events here indicated have their occurrence. Logically, and from the context, this term begins at the advent of Christ, and continues to what is technically called the millennial period. During this interval immense results—moral, spiritual, intellectual—travel from west to east. **When the enemy**—All adversaries to the true religion. **Shall come in like a flood**—As not unfrequently is the case during a long period in Messiah’s dispensation. **The Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him**—The Hebrew, here, has had abundant interpretations varying from our English Version, but with little approval from the best critics. “The Spirit,” otherwise rendered “the Wind of Jehovah”—a driving wind—“shall dam up a straitened river.” The words, in Hebrew, are of that pe-

21 ^a As for me, this *is* my covenant with them, saith the Lord; My Spirit that *is* upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed’s seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever.

⁹ Or, *put him to flight*.—^t Rom. 11. 26.—^u Heb. 8. 10; 10. 16.

culiar form which may be rendered either way. But the general sense or tenor of the context seems to call for a turning off from strict literalness (and that in the way of our Version) in order to preserve a consistent suitability throughout.

20. Redeemer...to Zion—The apostle Paul refers to this text as proof that when the Gentiles throughout the world shall have come into acceptance of the Christian religion, then apostate Israel shall also be converted thereto. Rom. xi, 25.

21. As for me...saith the Lord—Of late the prophet has been, but now Jehovah reappears as, the speaker; probably because he personates the “Redeemer” of the preceding verse. **This is my covenant**—Namely, the covenant of the Gospel, with all its spiritual benefits, which is to run on till the world ends. **My Spirit...upon thee**—First, on Messiah without measure; (John iii. 36;) then, on his people, the devoted ones of Israel, the true Israel, they of the “west” and they of regions where is “the rising of the sun.” From these, that is, the true Israel, (chap. xlix, 3,) “righteousness will now overflow to the whole people.” They will be raised to their high calling as God’s royal priesthood; and the oath to Abraham and the truth to Jacob will be fulfilled through successive generations, as it had been sworn to the fathers from the days of old. (*Birks*.)

CHAPTER LX.

Sec. 7. ZION’S FINAL GLORY.

The preceding two chapters present in dark colours the great moral deterioration of natural Israel, by which the better few, “the small remnant

CHAPTER LX.

ARISE, ^a shine; for thy light is come, and ^b the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee. **2** For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. **3** And the ^c Gentiles shall

^a Eph. 5. 14.—¹ Or, *be enlightened; for thy light cometh.*—^b Mal. 4. 2.

left," (chap. i, 9,) were overwhelmed, till Jehovah came again and manifested himself, through prophetic vision, for their deliverance. The place and order of the vision is Jerusalem, at the birth of the Messiah, with a comprehensive extension of the scene far into the latest days. This literal advent of Zion's Redeemer appears to take on a typical character of stages manifested gloriously in the far future. St. Paul quotes one of them when he (Rom. xi) applies it to the still future recovery of Israel, when the broken olive branches shall be grafted in once more. The Apocalypse (Rev. xx and xxii) borrows imagery from this chapter of blessings still future. The chapter is the close of the second cycle of those later prophecies of Isaiah, which also show an intimate relation to each of the earlier series; for example, the charge to comfort Zion (chap. xl, 1) is herein fulfilled, and her sorrowful complaints (chap. xlix, 1, 2) are silenced by rich abundance of blessing. No less intimate is the relation here with the opening and close of the earlier visions in chapters i, 26, 27, and ii, 1-5, with xxxv, 1, presenting thus a unity of structure in the whole book of Isaiah which neological commentators cannot well gainsay.

1. Arise—The chapter opens with an animating address to the delivered children of God. **Shine**—The image is a sunrise scene. The night, long and dismal, has brooded, but now gradually ends. **Thy light is come**—The tops of the mountains (chap. ii, 1-5, Micah iv, 1) are gilded, and are seen by the prophet, though far back in time. **Glory of the Lord...risen upon thee**—That is, upon Zion-Jerusalem. The light falls upon her, not for her sake alone, but for all man-

come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. **4** ^d Lift up thine eyes round about, and see: all they gather themselves together, ^e they come to thee: thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at *thy* side. **5** Then thou shalt see, and flow together, and thine heart shall fear, and be

^c Chap. 49, 6, 23; Rev. 21, 24.—^d Chap. 49, 18.
—^e Chap. 49, 20-22; 66, 12.

kind. This vision is welcome recompense for the darkness hitherto. (See chapters lviii, lix.) Zion is to have the first view of the new day.

2, 3. Darkness shall cover the earth—Apparently spoken of the Gentiles, whose "darkness" shall continue for awhile, but will be ultimately dissipated by the reflected light from Zion. **The Lord shall arise upon thee**—Zion is brought into light, not as a spectacle, not to be in contrast with Gentiles engrossed in darkness; but to impart her light upon Gentiles. This explains verse 2. The Lord is risen upon the whole pagan world in that he has confided to Zion—that is, the whole Christian world—the duty of direct evangelization in every part of the earth. Thus (verse 3) all nations are to walk in Zion's light of truth and salvation. **Brightness of thy rising**—The glory of Zion is to increase, and attract many and strong nations and kings, as by a light suddenly breaking on thickest gloom. The words here must not be weakened by a change to *thy rising brightness*. "Thy rising" is as the "sun of suns" coming over Jerusalem from the east and in surpassing splendour passing on to the west.

4. Lift up thine eyes—Zion is directed to look about her, and see the crowds approaching from afar. The crowds consist of dispersed Jews, **thy sons**; and more numerous of *heathen* as well. **Thy daughters**—The sons walk, the daughters are carried. Words used to heighten the parallelism.

5. Thou shalt see—Or, *fear*; it matters little which, in its ultimate meaning. (The Hebrew word is uncertain.) Both meanings may come in play—crowds so great coming into view may occasion surprise, yes, even

enlarged; because ¹ the ² abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the ³ forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee. **6** The multitude of camels shall cover thee, the dromedaries of Midian and ⁴ Ephah; all they from ⁵ Sheba shall come: they shall bring ⁶ gold and incense; and they shall show forth the praises of the Lord. **7** All the flocks of ⁷ Kedar shall be gathered together unto thee, the rams of Nebaioth shall minister unto thee: they shall come up with acceptance on mine altar, and ⁸ I will glorify the house of my glory. **8** Who are these *that fly as a cloud, and as the doves*

^f Rom. 11. 25.—² Or, *noise of the sea shall be turned toward thee*.—³ Or, *wealth*, verse 11; chap. 61. 6.—^g Gen. 25. 4.—^h Psa. 72. 10.—ⁱ Chap. 61. 6; Matt. 2. 11.—^k Gen. 25. 13.—^l Hag. 2. 7, 9.

fear. The heart of renewed Zion shall throb with wonder and joy at the sight of the abundance of western maritime nations converted to God; at the sight of the wealth and treasure pouring in for the Lord's service.

6, 7. Multitude—That is, a *stream* of camels, bearing presents to enrich Zion. **Dromedaries**—The camel is used for burden-bearing; the dromedary for fast travelling. Here presents are brought in reward for spiritual hospitalities, and glad tidings thereof are promptly sent afar. **Midian . . . Ephah . . . Sheba**—The two first named are thought to represent Northern and Central Arabia, and the latter Arabia Felix. Here the descendants of Abraham and Keturah were settled. Midian was their son, and Ephah their grandson. (Gen. xxv, 2, 4; xxxviii, 28, 36.) **Kedar . . . Nebaioth**—(See Smith's Bible Dictionary on these names.) These bring altar-victims, instead of seeking gain as formerly; and they all now volunteer themselves as spiritual tributaries. Their gifts, therefore, are received **with acceptance**—With gladness, because unselfishly offered.

8. Who are these . . . fly as a cloud—Emigrants from over the seas—from the west—the sails of whose ships are likened to flying clouds. A striking figure. **As . . . doves**—Skimming the waters as “doves” do the air. Refined poetic element here.

9. The isles shall wait for me—The people of the “isles” and of the

to their windows? **9** ^m Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first, ⁿ to bring thy sons from far, ^o their silver and their gold with them, ^p unto the name of the Lord thy God, and to the Holy One of Israel, ^q because he hath glorified thee. **10** And ^r the sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, ^s and their kings shall minister unto thee: for ^t in my wrath I smote thee, ^u but in my favour have I had mercy on thee. **11** Therefore thy gates ^v shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day nor night; that ^w men may bring unto thee the ^x forces of the Gentiles, and ^y that their

^m Psa. 72. 10; chap. 42. 4; 51. 5.—ⁿ Gal. 4. 26.—^o Psa. 68. 30; Zech. 14. 14.—^p Jer. 3. 17.—^q Chap. 55. 5.—^r Zech. 6. 15.—^s Chap. 49. 23; Rev. 21. 24.—^t Chap. 57. 17.—^u Chap. 54. 7, 8.—^v Rev. 21. 25.—^w Or, *wealth*, verse 5.

seacoast—naturally mariners—are also eager to become Zion's tributaries, and to bring to her the wealth of commerce. (Chap. xlii, 4.) Apostolic zeal and labour wrought them at once with greatest success. The figurative descriptions in these verses imply a glorious diffusion of the Gospel over peoples hitherto unfriendly to Zion. The language throughout is in Isaiah's accustomed drapery.

10. Strangers—Foreigners of false religions converted to the true religion. **In . . . wrath I smote thee**—This refers to the *morale* of wasted Jerusalem, and their captivity at Babylon. **Their kings**—Perhaps including Cyrus, Darius, etc., of Persia; likewise the later Christian kings.

11. Thy gates . . . open continually . . . day nor night—The gates of Zion, because thus open, denote the unremitting influx of converted new comers. **Forces of the Gentiles**—“Forces”—not unlikely their wealth as well as their people. (See verse 5.) **Their kings**—That these may be “brought bound, or in chains,” (*Chaldee Paraph.*;) “pompously attended,” (*Lowth*;) “with their retinues,” (*Noyes*.) But the Hebrew rather means, that they may be brought or led, in any way, (as by the force of truth,) to serve Jehovah. The following, however, is quite as likely to be the idea intended: that their kings may be led in as captives to grace the triumph of the true religion, after a long time making themselves brave against it.

kings *may be* brought. **12** *For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, *those* nations shall be utterly wasted. **13** *The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir tree, the pine tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary; and I will make the ^vplace of my feet glorious. **14** The sons also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee; and all they that despised thee shall ^abow themselves down at the soles of thy feet; and they shall call thee, The city of the Lord, ^aThe Zion of the Holy One of Is-

rael. **15** Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through *thee*, I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations. **16** Thou shalt also suck the milk of the Gentiles, ^band shalt suck the breast of kings: and thou shalt know that ^cI the Lord *am* thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob. **17** For brass I will bring gold, and for iron I will bring silver, and for wood brass, and for stones iron: I will also make thy officers peace, and thine exactors righteousness. **18** Violence shall no more be heard in

^v Zech. 14. 17, 19; Matt. 21. 44. — ^a Ch. 35. 2; 41. 19.
— ^y 1 Chr. 28. 2; Psal. 132. 7. — ^z Chap. 49. 23;

Rev. 3. 9. — ^a Heb. 12. 23; Rev. 14. 1. — ^b Ch. 49. 23; 61. 6; 66. 11, 12. — ^c Chap. 43. 3.

12. Nation and kingdom—Even at the height of Messianic triumphs it would seem resistance was occasionally made. So in the New Testament, at the so-called millennial periods, the conquests of the true religion will not fully prevail till after long unsuccessful struggles. **Shall perish**—Final resistance will end disastrously. This is the providential law, till the last enemy shall be conquered. Absolute peril awaits all who resist God.

13. The glory of Lebanon—The whole of it, here specified in its *trees*, shall be employed to beautify thee: as it did so, literally, in Zion's temple under Solomon, so shall it in the exalted figurative and spiritual senses. **The place of my feet**—See Ezek. xliii, 7; 1 Chron. xxvii, 2. The ark of the covenant is God's footstool. In chap. lxvi, 1, the whole earth is so named.

14. Sons... of them that afflicted thee—Descendants of thy ancient persecutors. **Shall come bending unto thee**—Shall confess the mistakes and sins of their fathers, and shall (not with nicknames or worse, as heretofore) respectfully acknowledge thee to be the city of Jehovah, the Zion of the Holy One of Israel. And they declare thereby their faith in the true God; for Jerusalem stands as the monument proclaiming to the world the true Godhead of Jehovah.

15. Whereas thou hast been forsaken—This is said under the figure of an abandoned wife; but the meaning would be clearer if read, "Instead of thy being a forsaken and hated

holy city, so that no one would pass through thee"—so that travellers and caravans did pass altogether by—I will exalt thee to be the eternal city—a position of growth in importance and honour, and which shall never cease to exist as such.

16. Suck the milk... the breast, etc.—The meaning here is, that Zion-Jerusalem, or the Messianic Church, shall draw on the resources of the more wealthy Gentiles as well as of kings: allegorical of being cherished with tenderest regard by them. From this, Zion is made to know that Jehovah is her all-compensating Lord and Saviour, *mighty to save*.

17. In the first part of verse 17, the material of which the city is built is the allegorical subject. **For brass I will bring gold...for iron...silver...for wood brass...for stones iron**—In Solomon's day (1 Kings x, 21, 27) civilization so rapidly advanced that in the above terms it was made a type, as here used, of advancing improvements evermore in Zion's city. Gold in place of brass, silver in place of iron, etc., signify ever-growing preciousness in all that pertains to the temple of holy Zion. Compare Rev. xxi, 10-21. **Thy officers peace**—Better, *Thy magistracy shall be peace*. The term characterizing it shall be "peace;" shall be, in other words, order, truth, love. These shall mark the whole of Zion's government. **Thy exactors**—Not tyrants or tyranny, but justice, equity absolute.

18. Her very walls shall suggest

thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shalt call ^dthy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise. **19** The ^esun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the LORD shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and ^fthy God thy glory. **20** ^gThy sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself: for the

^d Chap. 26. 1.—^e Rev. 21. 23; 22. 5.—^f Zech. 2. 5.—^g See Amos 8. 9.—^h Chap. 52. 1; Rev. 21. 27.—ⁱ Psa. 37. 11, 22; Matt. 5. 5.

nothing else than **salvation**, or safety, or perfect security. **Her gates**—The places where differences are judged or adjusted, shall be utterly without cases to adjudicate, hence they are worthily named, **Praise**.

19, 20. The sun shall be no more thy light—For thy light and beauty shall exceed its brightness. No words can excel in beauty these verses. The spiritual Jerusalem is glorified through the shining of Jehovah as her everlasting light. In this verse, light denotes knowledge of spiritual truth, as a characteristic source of moral power concentered in the victories and blessedness of the Church militant and triumphant.

21. Thy people...all righteous—Because true disciples of the Lord. Chapter xxvi, 2. **They shall inherit the land**—Or, as St. Paul transforms the words, it shall be "the inheritance of the saints in light." Jehovah's desire is expressed that what he has planted, watered, and pruned, shall be gloriously productive. **That I may be glorified**, contains the idea of such desire.

22. A little one shall become a thousand—To the broadest dimensions the relatively **small one** shall be extended. Gen. xviii, 18. Not, however, from descent from Abraham is this increase of numbers to obtain, but from an extension of spiritual fellowship to all the families of the earth. Micah iv, 7. This is surely to come to pass, but in God's own time. The meaning is, God prepares by stages for the times of Messiah, then for the grand and final conquests of his Church militant. This chapter is ad-

LORD shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended. **21^h** Thy people also *shall be* all righteous: ⁱthey shall inherit the land forever, ^kthe branch of my planting, ^lthe work of my hands, that I may be glorified. **22^m** A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation: I the LORD will hasten it in his time.

^k Chap. 61. 3; Matthew 15. 13; John 15. 2.—^l Chap. 29. 23; 45. 11; Eph. 2. 10.—^m Matt. 13. 31, 32.

dressed to Zion-Jerusalem, and so sustains the address, predicting growth and blessedness to the end.

Messiah's Work of Mercy and Judgment.

CHAPTERS lxi-lxvi.

CHAPTER LXI.

SEC. 1. MESSIAH'S MINISTRY ON EARTH.

Here begins the third series of the later prophecies, or the seventh and last division of the whole book. Messiah's work, chiefly in the last times, is herein laid out. Sections and sub-sections mark the artificial structure of the series, as will be noted at chapters lxi-lxiii, 6; lxiii, 7-lxv; and lxvi, for the larger divisions. This is all that is needful to say—all for which there is space to say—for the general use of the reader.

There are hints, in verses 1-3, that the year of jubilee (as in the preceding chapter) was the occasion on which this prophecy was written. So, at least, thinks Dr. Kay of the "Speaker's Commentary." Whether or not that were the occasion, the imagery seems to be derived from what would be peculiar to such occasion.

1-3. The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me—Upon whom? The use which our Lord Jesus Christ at Nazareth (Luke iv, 16-22) made of these words must decide that he made himself the person meant. He declared himself herein the predicted and divinely anointed Servant of Jehovah; and that he had brought glad tidings of redemption to his people. The passages in chapters xlii, 6, 7; lix, 20, 21,

CHAPTER LXI.

THE ^a Spirit of the Lord God ^{is} upon me; because the Lord ^b hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me ^c to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim ^d liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; ^e 2 ^e To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and 'the day of vengeance of our God; ^f to comfort all that mourn; ^g 3 To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, ^h to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called Trees of righteousness,

^a Chap. 11. 2; Luke 4. 18; John 1. 33; 3. 34.
^b Psalm 45. 7. — ^c Psa. 147. 3; chap. 57. 15.
^d Chap. 42. 7; Jer. 34. 8. — ^e Lev. 25. 9.
^f Chap. 34. 8; 63. 4; 66. 14; Mal. 4. 1, 3; 2 Thess. 1. 7-9. — ^g Chap. 57. 18; Matt. 5. 4.

point out the same idea. **He** (the "Lord God") **hath sent me** — The "Servant of Jehovah," the "Messiah." See Psa. xlv, 7; also Mark i, 1, and Acts x, 38. The jubilee phrases are figures-expressive of the work really wrought by Christ at his visible advent. The phrases are as follows: "The meek," "the brokenhearted," "the captives," that is, to sin; "the prison-opening," "the acceptable year," "the mourners in Zion," etc. All these were terms of jubilee specialty, and the objects mentioned were those upon which Jesus was tenderly compassionate.

4. **And they** — The strong flourishing "trees of righteousness," of verse 3; the sound and the efficient, whom the grace of the Gospel brought out and made grand workers in Messiah's kingdom. **Waste cities** — Destruction occasioned in consequence of the sins of the people in days gone by. Of this import, also, are the parallel expressions in the verse.

5. **Strangers...sons of the alien** — That is, Gentiles converted to the true religion. **Your flocks** — The keeping of flocks was a large husbandry in Palestine. The employment of Gentile keepers denotes a breaking down of "the middle wall of partition." All have become Christians together. All are now strong and willing workers together in the world's great pasture-field and vineyard. **Other**

ⁱ The planting of the Lord, ^k that he might be glorified.

4 **And they shall** ^l build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations. 5 **And** ^m strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the alien ⁿ shall be your ploughmen and your vinedressers. 6 **But ye shall be named the Priests of the Lord:** ^o men shall call you the Ministers of our God: ^p ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory shall ye boast yourselves.

7 **For your shame ye shall have double;** and for confusion they shall rejoice in

^h Psa. 30. 11. — ⁱ Chap. 60. 21. — ^k John 15. 8.
^l Chapter 49. 8; 58. 12; Ezekiel 36. 33-36. —
^m Eph. 2. 12. — ⁿ Exodus 19. 6; chapter 60. 17;
66. 21; 1 Pet. 2. 5, 9; Rev. 1. 6; 5. 10. — ^o Chap.
60. 5, 11, 16. — ^p Chap. 40. 2; Zech. 9. 12.

meaning than spiritual this verse has not.

6. **Ye shall be named...Priests...**

Ministers — Redeemed Israel is now intermingled with crowds of converted Gentiles giving help to the building up of the "wastes" of verse 4. Priority gives to Israel the prerogatives of the priesthood; yet all, in a sense, are embodied into "a kingdom of priests and a holy nation." 1 Peter ii. 5-9. See, also, Exodus xix, 6. Spiritual service, rendered by Gentiles, is the wealth of the Israel, and the **glory** achieved by them for the divine cause shall be the fruit of Israel's fidelity.

7. **For your shame...double** — The Hebrew is perplexing. Clearly another promise is here given, possibly pursuant to chap. xl, 2. Instead of shame for past sin and punishment, ye shall have abundant recompense. The promise in its largeness of meaning is: Instead of the former meagerness of the dispensation out of which you have emerged, you shall have the ever-expanding glory of Messiah's new and final order of things in this world. **Their portion...they shall possess** — An *enallage* common to Isaiah, or a change from "your" to "their" occurs here. The same persons are intended. "Their portion" is the same as *your* "portion;" "they shall possess," the same as you shall possess. The "double" means the far larger meas-

their portion: therefore in their land they shall possess the double: everlasting joy shall be unto them. **8** For "I the Lord love judgment, "I hate robbery for burnt offering; and I will direct their work in truth, "and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. **9** And their seed shall be known among the Gentiles, and their offspring among the people: all that see them shall acknowledge them, "that they are the seed *which* the Lord hath blessed. **10** "I will greatly rejoice

g Psalm 11. 7.—*r* Chap. 1. 11, 13.—*s* Chap. 53. 3.—*t* Chap. 65. 23.—*u* Hab. 3. 18.—*v* Psal. 132. 9, 16.

ure. **Confusion**—This refers to the disorders in general of the old state—the old judgments of God on Israel's sin.

8. This verse connects with verses 1-7 by the word **for**, to show the attitude of Jehovah—who, as God over all, now speaks—toward Israel and his former oppressors. **I the Lord love judgment**—That which is right and just in the experience of my people, who have heretofore done evil, and have suffered by the hand of the oppressor. This, on God's part, was right and just, but no thanks to the oppressor. **I hate robbery**—The oppressor has punished with gross injustice, and in sheer selfishness. **Burnt offering** is, with good critics, now accounted as meaning *injustice*, (not from the Hebrew root once supposed.) Jehovah avers his hatred of injustice toward his people, whom, and for which injustice, he now compensates with another and glorious estate, as given in verses 1-7. Hereafter Jehovah **will direct their work**—their proper estate under Messiah—in truth. *Reward* shall be the order henceforth.

9. Their seed shall be known—Their posterity shall "be known" as a people divinely beloved; and that, too, among peoples once their oppressors.

10. I will greatly rejoice—The Servant of Jehovah, or Messiah, is again the speaker. To him the calling—that of bringing messages of salvation to Jehovah's people—is a joyful one. In preparatory adornment for this, Jehovah invests him with **garments of salvation...the robe of**

in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for "he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, "as a bridegroom "decketh *himself* with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth *herself* with her jewels. **11** For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord God will cause "righteousness and "praise to spring forth before all the nations.

w Chap. 49. 18; Rev. 21. 2.—*1* Heb. *decketh as a priest*.—*x* Psal. 72. 3; 85. 11.—*y* Chap. 60. 18; 62. 7.

righteousness—Do not these symbolize, respectively, the estate of Messiah at his resurrection and at his ascension, as our risen Redeemer? It so seems. He, the Messiah, is thus bedecked as with a priestly coronet—a tiara or costly turban. This painstaking adornment is like to that of a **bridegroom** in grand array; and to that of a **bride** when she appears in her **jewels**. Conceptions are here intermixed: namely, Christ and his Church; the Saviour and the saved; the Intercessor and those for whom prayer is made. The Servant of Jehovah's priestly office avails to accomplish an orderly renown to his Church, once, and even recently, in humiliation. (See verses 5, 8, 11.)

11. As the earth bringeth...as the garden causeth...to spring forth—For similarly as the earth in detailed order brings forth her productions, and as a garden its plants, so shall the Lord Jehovah **cause righteousness**, or righteous and holy character, and **praise**, or gratitude, on account of such character, **to spring forth**, and become abundant to the presence and perpetual observation of all peoples. And this shall be the reward—the compensating result, of all the travail undergone by the world's priestly Messiah.

CHAPTER LXII.

MESSIAH'S HEAVENLY INTERCESSION.

1. The "Servant of Jehovah," or Messiah, is the speaker still. He will not be at rest till what is promised in the preceding three verses is accomplished. This is the present view of

CHAPTER LXII.

FOR ^aZion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp *that* burneth. **2** ^bAnd the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory ^cand thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the LORD shall name. **3** Thou shalt also be ^da crown of glory in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God. **4** ^eThou

shalt no more be termed 'Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed ^f'Desolate': but thou shalt be called ^g'Hephzi-bah, and thy land ^h'Beulah: for the LORD delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married. **5** For as a young man marieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee: and ⁱas the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so ^jshall thy God rejoice over thee.

6 ^kI have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, *which* shall never hold their peace day nor night: ^lye that make

¹ That is, *My delight is in her.*—² That is, *Married.*—³ Heb. *with the joy of the bridegroom.*—^h Ch. 65. 19.—ⁱ Ezek. 3. 17; 33. 7.—⁴ Or, *ye that are the LORD'S remembrancers.*

^a Verses 6, 7; Psalm 51. 18; 2 Thess. 3. 1.—^b Chap. 60. 3.—^c Verses 4, 12; chap. 65. 15.—^d Zech. 9. 16.—^e Hosea 1. 10; 1 Pet. 2. 10.—^f Chap. 49. 14; 54. 6, 7.—^g Chap. 54. 1.

the best commentators. **For Zion's sake**—Zion is the generic word for the great Messianic cause. **Will I not hold my peace**—It is the office of Messiah to ask or to work for the earth as his inheritance, (Psa. ii, 8,) and that of Jehovah to give it. Does not the passage refer rather to Messiah's proclamation of the Gospel? **Righteousness... go forth as brightness**—Go forth until the holiness of the Church shall be abundantly manifest, as a light shining out of darkness. **Righteousness and salvation** utter each the very same idea; both are needed only to balance the sentence. The terms **brightness** and **lamp** indicate Zion as not yet so fully out of the shade as is needful; but that in good time she will enjoy abundance of light, and diffuse it unto others.

2, 3. Gentiles shall see thy righteousness—Thesamethought in respect to the Gentiles as in chap. lx, 3. They shall come to see the amazing moral superiority of Jehovah's cause; and all kings, or men of power among them, shall be attracted thereto, and give it favour and advancement. Thus the Zion of God shall be called by a new name among them—a name of honour preeminently, because seen over all other religions to be of superior holiness and character throughout. The Lord Jehovah, in the march of his redemptive providences, will bring this around. In his hands, thus dispensing light, spirit, and power, Zion is to be seen as what she really is: **A crown of glory... a royal diadem;**

terms implying an object of superlively glorious moral beauty.

4, 5. Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken—Messiah and his Zion are concentered. "Thou" refers to both in one. No more shall the terms, **Forsaken** and **Desolate** be thy reproachful name. But thy new name shall be, **Hephzi-bah**—"My-delight-in-her," (Hebrew.) For Jehovah does have delight in thee. **And thy land**—Thy home. **Beulah**—And this means, *Happily-married one*, with a home springing into joy to its possessor. This idea of possession in the words *marrying a land*, helps one to understand the sentence **so shall thy sons marry thee**; that is, shall possess thee. Wife, children, and servants, in Hebrew law, and in ruling ideas in the early ages, (Mozley,) were held in absolute possession by the chief, or head, of the family. So in the tender social sense, a young man always possesses, when he marries, his bride. As is the joy of such possession, so shall God have joy in Zion, is the thought here.

6, 7. Watchmen—This alludes to the practice of stationing on city walls men who served as criers when news good or bad was to be announced. As applied to the spiritual Jerusalem or Zion, they mean instructors of the people—priests and prophets, ministers of the true religion. Ezek. iii, 17; xxxiii, 7. **Never hold their peace**—Constant warning and instruction was their duty

mention of the LORD, keep not silence, **7** And give him no ^a rest, till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem ^b a praise in the earth. **8** The LORD hath sworn by his right hand, and by the arm of his strength, ^c Surely I will no more ^d give thy corn to be meat for thine enemies; and the sons of the stranger shall not drink thy wine, for the which thou hast laboured: **9** But they that have gathered it shall eat it, and praise the LORD; and they that have brought it together

shall drink it ^e in the courts of my holiness.

10 Go through, go through the gates; ^f prepare ye the way of the people; cast up, cast up the highway; gather out the stones; ^g lift up a standard for the people. **11** Behold, the LORD hath proclaimed unto the end of the world, ^h Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh; behold, his ⁱ reward is with him, and his ^j work before him. **12** And they shall call them, The holy

⁵ Heb. *silence*.—^k Chap. 61. 11; Zeph. 3. 20.

—⁶ Heb. *If I give*, etc.—^l Deut. 28. 31; Jer. 5. 17.—^m Deut. 12. 12; 14. 23, 26; 16. 11. 14.

ⁿ Chap. 40. 3; 57. 14.—^o Chap. 11. 12.—^p Zech. 9. 9; Matt. 21. 5; John 12. 15.—^q Chap. 40. 10; Rev. 22. 12.—^r Or, *recompense*.

Make mention of the Lord—The Lord's reminders as watchmen of Israel's highest interests were enjoined to fail not in diligence and fidelity.

Give him no rest—Literally, no *silence*. "Ye that are set as Jehovah's reminders give to yourselves no rest, no silence, in your assigned work; and give him (Jehovah) no rest, no silence, till he establish the newly restored Jerusalem, his holy Zion.

A praise in the earth—Or, a permanent spiritual power for the salvation of the world.

8, 9. Sworn by...hand...arm—Possibly in answer to the foregoing provided—for intercessions, Jehovah swears by "hand" and "arm"—symbols of strength—pledging infinite power to fulfil his promise. Possibly this wrought an effect which may be paraphrased as follows: "As I am the eternal Jehovah, I never more will suffer Zion's enemies, near or far, home or foreign, within or without, to plunder or cut off her supplies of **corn** and **wine**, both of which herself alone shall forever enjoy in the spirit of **praise...in the courts of my holiness**." Enemies, abroad or near at hand, may here represent Zion's moral foes or hinderances, within or without; and "corn" and "wine" are symbols of abounding spiritual sustenance and joy.

10. Go through, go through—This is equivalent to, *Pass on, pass on*. In these words, twice repeated, a picture is given of Gentiles coming up in continuous lines for entrance through 'the gates of Zion, with a

voice cheering them on their passage, **Cast up, cast up the highway**, followed by the charge to remove obstacles of idolatry from the oncoming multitudes, and to rear a **standard** bearing the no-doubtful motto of holiness to Jehovah. The practical truth here taught is, That hope and prayer, and unflagging work, are required for the purity and extension of Messiah's cause in all the world.

11. Behold, the Lord hath proclaimed—Better, *Jehovah proclaimeth*. The message is to go to the ends of the earth. Remote nations must know that Jehovah alone is the true God, and that in a high sense his people are the only truly favoured ones of the earth. Some think the long caravan trains of returning Israel from Babylon to be the occasion for announcements such as this, here and elsewhere. Partly so, it may be; but the prophet's ken has come to reach far above and beyond this once most important event. **Daughter of Zion**—Primarily, Jerusalem and its people; but the far-extending Zion of God is the larger meaning. **Thy salvation cometh**—Better, *thy Saviour cometh*. However, it matters little which terms are used; yet the latter takes precedence from what follows. **His reward** (Psa. ii, 7) **is with him**—Which is now coming to be a realized possession.

12. Time is near when the Church, so extended and flourishing, shall be called by its generally accepted name. **The holy people—the redeemed of the Lord**—Yea, more. Reverting back to the mother-sym-

people, The redeemed of the LORD: and thou shalt be called, Sought out, A city not forsaken.

CHAPTER LXIII.

WHO is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this *that is* ¹ glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength?

r Verse 4. — *l* Heb. *decked*. — *a* Rev 19. 13.

bol thereof, namely, *Jerusalem, thou shalt be called, Sought out — Derushah. A city not forsaken — Irlo-neezebah.* So Alexander translates; and the meaning is, Thou art the all-desired place; thou art no more in peril of invasion from old enemies, as was ancient Jerusalem. Henceforth thou art the Protected-of-Jehovah; and, blessed with his smiles, thou shalt be never forsaken more.

CHAPTER LXIII.

THE VINTAGE OF JUDGMENT, chap. lxiii, 1-6.

In preceding chapters, (lx-lxii,) the glow of hope was paramount, and the vision of the coming glory was so full with the prophet, (with occasional exceptions,) that in a measure he overlooked the fact of still surviving, though weakening, hostile powers gnashing spite on Zion, by reason of conscious decadence of their own might and dominion. Reference is made to these in chap. lix, 18, also in lx, 12. Here, in verses 1-6, the reference to them is distinctly pronounced. Edom is here, as in chap. xxxiv, (as it also is in Psa. cxxxvii, 7,) taken to represent a power ever malignant against Israel and against Israel's religion.

1. The scene here introduced is as if Jehovah, in a broken dramatic picture, is returning with the tread of a triumphant conqueror from a complete victory over foes, and the people cry out, **Who is this that cometh from Edom** — Ever a scornful enemy to the Jews, and even to the latest day of their history a relentless one. **With dyed garments** — Edom means *red*; some, from this fact, have needlessly supposed a play upon words, and not a

I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. **2** Wherefore **art thou* red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat? **3** I have ^b trodden the winepress alone; and of the people *there was* none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and

b Lam. 1. 15; Rev. 14. 19, 20; 19. 15.

reference to the land of Edom. This coincidence of blood-red with the dazzling garments of the conqueror is, however, quite too fanciful. **Bozrah** — A town within the limits of Edom, not the Bozrah of the Haurân. **I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save** — This is the answer of the conqueror, Jehovah.

2. The next question is, **Wherefore ... red in thine apparel** — Why bespattered as if with red grapejuice, **like him that treadeth in the winefat or winepress.**

3, 4. In reply, the mistake of his visage, (verse 1,) as that of an earthly warrior approaching as from afar, is explained. Not that kind of a warrior is he; but he is as one who has braved sin, death, and hell at Gethsemane and on the cross, then rose as a conqueror out of the grave, and ascended to the highest heaven. Eph. iv, 8, 9. **Trodden the winepress alone** — If this refers to the closing scenes of Christ's life, as not improbably it may, at least in more than a secondary way, then those scenes are present or past as seen in vision, but future as actually to be viewed in exposition. He went emphatically "alone" to his death, with garments soiled and dripping; but on regaining victory and power, held for a time in abeyance, he hastened to judgment upon the unrighteous and incorrigible, causing their utter separation from among those humble ones who were ready to receive him and render to him such aid as they were able. For the while, the process is destructive, but in the end he shall put all enemies under his feet. Of the last part of verse 3, **their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment**, Dr. W. Kay says, on the

I will stain all my raiment. **4** For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come. **5** "And I looked, and *there was none to help*; and I wondered that *there was none to uphold*: therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me; and my fury, it upheld me. **6** And I will tread down the people in mine anger, and *make them drunk in my fury*,

and I will bring down their strength to the earth.

7 I will mention the *lovingkindnesses of the Lord*, and the praises of the Lord, according to all that the Lord hath bestowed on us, and the great goodness toward the house of Israel, which he hath bestowed on them according to his mercies, and according to the multitude of his lovingkindnesses. **8** For he

c Chap. 24. 8; 61. 2.—d Chap. 41. 28; 59. 16.
—e John 15. 32.—f Psal. 98. 1; chap. 59. 16.

g Rev. 16. 6.—h Chapter 41. 8, 9; Neh. 9. 9; Ezek. 16. 6, 14; Hosea 2. 19.

phrase "will stain:" "The unique form of the Hebrew verb, *ga'il*, seems meant to connect it with the word 'redeemed' (*ge'il*) in verse 4, as though the stains were marks of his having fulfilled the duty of *go'el*—the avenger of blood and the reinstater of his oppressed kinsman."—*Sp. Comment.* **The day of vengeance**—Announced before, (chap. lxi, 2,) to follow "the acceptable year," a period during which the best great efforts of the Messianic reign of peace and salvation are exemplified. But in contrast with this is a period wherein surviving powers of evil gather strength, and upon which the positive side of Messiah's righteousness and judgment must be visited, and his own true people be avenged. This is the year of Messiah's redeemed people. This principle has many a time had, and will yet have, exemplification in Messianic or Christian history.

5, 6. I looked... there was none to help—These opening words do but repeat chap. lix, 16, with one change only, that of the person, which, in the latter is Jehovah, while in the former it is Messiah, or the Lord's Anointed—the Servant of Jehovah. **I wondered**—Amid rank rebellion there ought, in the nature of things, to be some exceptions; some might, perchance, have conscience enough left to have taken sides with him. But not even one appeared. **Therefore mine own arm brought salvation**—Namely, to his sorely oppressed spiritual Israel. Opposers shall not escape. Hostile nations and individual souls alike shall drink the cup of retribution to the dregs. Full justice shall be done to his righteous cause.

It shall be shown that no incorrigible foe can stand. Thus ends this obscure and dramatic scene, in which some moderns see little or nothing of Christ, as Calvin, Grotius, Alexander, Barnes, and others; while earlier commentators, and not a few modern, see much of him, displaying the righteousness of his cause, and the peril of opposition to it.

THE LAST CONTROVERSY WITH ISRAEL, lxiii, 7-lxv, 25.

Israel's former Mercies and Sins.

There are various schemes of division of the matter now following. The one here adopted as best, is that of two well-defined sections, namely, The Last Controversy of Israel, with subdivisions as the topics vary, (lxiii, 7-lxv, 25,) and The Full Redemption of Zion, comprising chapter lxvi.

7. I will mention the lovingkindness of the Lord—Or, *I will record*, etc. The words of the voice recall the deep religious sense of Psalm cxxxix. **Praises of the Lord... bestowed... mercies**, etc.—That is, in the name of the Church, to such a degree restored, the prophet recounts the Lord's mercies, which show that he is worthy of abounding thanksgiving from the Church.

8. He said—Jehovah said, in the exercise of his great mercy. **Surely**—Without possible ground for doubt. **They are my people**—They *only* are the people. **That will not lie**—That is, that are true to the covenant with me. The body of Israel had not so proved: but these are they whose characters have been proved. **He was their Saviour**—Namely, of the

said, Surely they *are* my people, children *that* will not lie: so he was their Saviour. **9** ¹In all their affliction he was afflicted, ²and the Angel of his presence saved them: ³in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and ⁴he bare them, and carried them all the days of old.

10 But they ¹rebelled, and ²vexed his Holy Spirit: ³therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and he fought against them. **11** Then he remembered the days of old, Moses, and his people, *saying*, Where *is* he that ¹brought them up out of the sea with the ²shepherd of his flock? ³where *is* he that put his Holy Spirit within him? **12** That led *them* by the right hand of Moses ⁴with his

glorious arm, ¹dividing the water before them, to make himself an everlasting name? **13** ²That led them through the deep, as a horse in the wilderness, *that* they should not stumble? **14** As a beast goeth down into the valley, the Spirit of the LORD caused him to rest; so didst thou lead thy people, ³to make thyself a glorious name.

15 ⁴Look down from heaven, and behold ⁵from the habitation of thy holiness and of thy glory: ⁶where *is* thy zeal and thy strength, ⁷the sounding ⁸of thy bowels and of thy mercies toward me? are they restrained? **16** ⁹Doubtless thou art our Father, though Abraham ¹⁰be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us

ⁱ Judg. 10. 16; Zech. 2. 8; Acts 9. 4.—^k Exod. 14. 19; 23. 20, 21; 33. 14; Mal. 3. 1; Acts 12. 11.—^l Deut. 7. 7, 8.—^m Exod. 19. 4; Deut. 1. 31; 32. 11, 12; chap. 46. 3. 4.—ⁿ Exod. 15. 24; Num. 14. 11; Psa. 78. 56; 95. 9.—^o Psa. 78. 40; Acts 7. 51; Eph. 4. 30.—^p Exod. 23. 21.—^q Exodus 14. 30; 32. 11, 12; Num. 14. 13, 14; Jer. 2. 6.

few who, out of severe trial, proved genuine, and deserving to be saved.

9. In all their affliction he was afflicted—Was a sharer in “their affliction,” and consequently not the inflicter, or, *he was not one who afflicted*. The original well bears either meaning.

The difference arises by **לֹא**, *not*, in the Hebrew text, and **לְבַד**, *for him*, in the margin. Original copies vary on these two forms. To general readers the difference is not essential, and scarcely important. **Angel of his presence**—(See Exod. xxiii, 20, 21; Num. xx, 16.) This means the “angel” standing in his presence. In Old Testament theophanies, the Servant, or Messenger—in other words, the Messiah, often appeared in bodily form to his people or their representatives. The remaining words tenderly express the divine interferences for God’s ancient saints.

10. But they rebelled—A charge often made against Judah and Israel. **And vexed his Holy Spirit**—“His Holy Spirit” is God himself, the Holy Ghost of the New Testament; though the Old Testament development does but indistinctly define the third person of the Godhead. **He was turned**—He left them to the consequences of their chosen course.

11–13. Then he remembered the days of old—His own covenant was

² Or, *shepherds*, as Psa. 77. 20.—^r Num. 11. 17, 25; Neh. 9. 20; Dan. 4. 8; Hag. 2. 5.—^s Ex. 15. 6.—^t Exod. 14. 21; Josh. 3. 16.—^u Psalm 106. 9.—^v 2 Sam. 7. 23.—^w Deut. 26. 15; Psa. 80. 14.—^x Psa. 33. 14.—³ Or, *the multitude*.—^y Jer. 31. 20; Hos. 11. 8.—^z Deut. 32. 6; 1 Chr. 29. 10; chap. 64. 8.—^a Job 14. 21; Eccl. 9. 5.

not forgotten, though unavailing to the people if they kept not their part good. Their repentance always caused Jehovah to return to his wonted mercies. See Joshua xxiv, 31; Judges ii, 6–10; Isa. xli, 10–14; xlv, 1–6. **As a horse in the wilderness**—Or, as a courier through the desert, without stumbling. So the Israelites were led without falling while they submitted to Jehovah’s guidance.

14, 15. As a beast—Collectively for a herd of cattle or flock of sheep. **Goeth down into the valley**—That is, to luxuriant feeding places, and for rest. **So didst thou lead thy people**—In a general way all through their history. **Look down from heaven**—Chap. lvii, 15. A metaphor, as in the reference designating the infinite grandeur of Deity, not his locality. **Where is thy zeal**—Thy former zeal for thy people—thy might once shown so often by their deliverances. **Sounding of thy bowels**—Organs of the chest, deemed the seat of compassionate emotions, which, when intense, caused a stirring and a sound. Chap. xvi, 11. The whole importunate appeal for new blessings is made on the ground that God, in olden time, was full of compassion toward Israel, as just stated, verse 13.

16. Doubtless—Rather, *surely*. **Thou art our Father**—And to thee,

not: thou, O LORD, *art* our Father, ⁴our Redeemer; thy name *is* from everlasting.

17 O LORD, why hast thou ^bmade us to err from thy ways, and ^chardened our heart from thy fear? ^dReturn for thy servants' sake, the tribes of thine inheritance. 18 ^eThe people of thy holiness have possessed *it* but a little while; ^four adversaries have trodden down thy sanctuary. 19 We are *thine*: thou

4 Or, *our Redeemer from everlasting is thy name.*—^bPsa. 119. 10.—^cSee chapter 6. 10, with John 12. 40; Rom. 9. 18.—^dNum. 10. 36; Psa. 90. 13.—^eDeut. 7. 6; 26. 19; chap. 62. 12;

not to **Abraham**, will we look for help. Their national privileges, derived through "Abraham," had proved, through their own faithlessness, unsatisfactory and largely unfruitful; and now they would fain look to Him who not only appointed them, but especially could alone uphold the people, and make their relation as a separate nation fruitful of good to them.

17. **Made us to err...hardened our heart**—Such expressions in the Bible are the simple-minded, oriental, phenomenal way of looking at the matter of God's overruling providence, as if that were efficiently productive of evil as well as of good; as if that were the cause, not merely the occasion, of human wickedness. Yet counter expressions by the thousand, in the Bible, of that same childlikeness, of ancient simplicity in apprehension, show that the orientals no more held God to be blamed for the evil around them than they held that a solid rock wall, against which if a foolhardy man dashed his head, was to be blamed for the broken skull and consequent death. See chap. vi, 9, 10, and notes there.

18, 19. **The people of thy holiness**—People adhering to principles of the divine holiness, is an expression stronger than the phrase, thy holy people, and is to be preferred. God's interposition in their behalf is pleaded for in the preceding, and continued in this verse, on the ground that, as the covenant people with God, they held peaceable possession of the land of promise **but a little while**, because their sins had made him to become their enemy; but now that they return in penitence, they plead for spir-

never barest rule over them; ^gthey were not called by thy name.

CHAPTER LXIV.

OH that thou wouldest ^hrend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down, that ⁱthe mountains might flow down at thy presence, **2** As *when* ^jthe melting fire burneth, the fire causeth the waters to boil, to make thy name known

Dan. 8. 24.—^fPsalms 74. 7.—^gOr, *thy name was not called upon them*, chapter 65. 1.—^hPsalms 144. 5.—ⁱJudges 5. 5; Micah 1. 4.—^j1 Heb. *the fire of meltings*.

itual and eternal possession on the ground of such having been the intent of the covenant on God's part. Besides, the original and literal promised possession is now **trodden down** by foes, and this gives reason for his people's stronger and more persistent pleading. Besides, still further, say they, **We are thine**. Thy foes are not thy people. They will not have thee as their ruler. We are of old. We belong to the line who always held sacred thy spiritual covenant. Yet "but a little while" have we held spiritual possession.

CHAPTER LXIV.

ISRAEL'S CONTINUED AND MORE IMPORTUNATE PRAYER, chap. lxiv.

This chapter completes the prophecy begun at chap. lxiii, 7. Except in increased intensity, it has no distinguishing line of thought different from the last chapter, starting at verse 15.

1. **Rend**—Or, *tear asunder*. **The heavens**—The overhanging heavens, to simple fancy, was the seat of Jehovah's power. Thence came the lightning and the thunder. Jehovah's sudden and sublime descent was prayed for, to melt away the mountain difficulties in the way of Zion's permanent settlement and rest.

2. **The melting fire burneth...waters to boil**—The point here is the quickness of the effect prayed for in verse 1. *As fire burns brush or boils water*, so quick do Israel's national foes tremble. Here are two figures: one of swift, rapid, roaring consumption by the flames, the other of violent agitation and tumult, like water boiling

to thine adversaries, *that* the nations may tremble at thy presence! ■ When ^cthou didst terrible things *which* we looked not for, thou camest down, the mountains flowed down at thy presence. 4 For since the beginning of the world ^dmen have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye ^eseen, O God, besides thee, *what* he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him. 5 Thou meetest him that rejoiceth ^fand worketh righteousness, *those* that remember thee in thy ways: behold, thou art wroth; for we have sinned: ^gin those

^c Exod. 24. 10; Judg. 5. 4, 5; Psa. 68. 8; Hab. 3. 3, 6.—^d Psa. 31. 19; 1 Cor. 2. 9.—^e Or, *seen a God besides thee, which doeth so for him*, etc.—^f Acts 10. 35.—^g Chap. 26. 8.—^g Mal.

over glowing fires. "Melting fire" such as this the wicked cannot long endure. God's majesty is similarly presented in Judges v, 4, 5; Psalm xcvi, 5; Micah i, 3, 4; Hab. iii, 4, 5.

3. **Thou didst terrible things**—Examples were in the deliverance from Egypt, and in the entrance to Canaan. **We looked not for**—That is, no one before ever witnessed such phenomena, and they were unexpected when they occurred. **Mountains flowed down**—Trembled, shook, at thy presence. The reference is to the transactions accompanying the giving of the law at Sinai.

4. **Since the beginning of the world**—Or, beginning of Israel's history. **Men have not heard**—Men of other nations have not witnessed, by ear or eye, such displays of divine power in relation to Israel, nor did mind ever conceive of them. This proverbial style (for such it is) is applied by St. Paul (1 Cor. ii. 9) to the Gospel as a mystery, or something hidden till revealed by the Holy Spirit.

5. Not to dwell on the many views of critics on the construction here, let it suffice to say that the probable meaning may be gained in a translation and paraphrase as follows: *Thou didst favorably meet him* (singular for plural) *that rejoiced to work righteousness, when they remembered thee in thy ways*. If this be put in the present tense, as it may be, it would read to us a general truth, useful to all: *Behold, thou—gracious as thou art—wast*

is continuance, and we shall be saved. 6 But we are all as an unclean thing, and all ^hour righteousnesses *are* as filthy rags; and we all do ⁱfade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away. 7 And ^kthere is none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee: for thou hast hid thy face from us, and hast ^lconsumed us, ^mbecause of our iniquities. 8 But now, O LORD, thou art our Father; we are the clay, ⁿand thou our potter; and we all are ^othe work of thy hand.

3. 6.—^h Phil. 3. 9.—ⁱ Psa. 90. 5, 6.—^k Hos. 7. 7.—^l Heb. *melting*.—^m Heb. *by the hand*: as Job 8. 4.—ⁿ Chap. 63. 15.—^o Chap. 29. 16; 45. 9; Jer. 18. 6; Rom. 9. 20, 21.—ⁿ Eph. 2. 10.

angry, for we were guilty. In those—Thy ways above mentioned. **Is continuance**—Or, eternal permanence. **And we shall be saved**—Namely, by trusting in thee.

6, 7. **We are all**—As a nation. **An unclean thing**—Polluted, defiled. **Our righteousnesses**—Even our religious acts are such as the Holy One of Israel cannot accept, being neither appointed nor sincere. **As filthy rags**—As a menstuous garment, and therefore repulsive. The comparisons here receive their colouring from the Levitical law on purity. **Fade as a leaf**—Our beauty (moral beauty) endures no better than fading, withering autumn leaves, so easily swept away. **Like the wind**—Our national sins also cause us to be swept by tempests of divine judgment. As true to-day as then, is this; as applicable to nations now, as to ancient Israel. Never can fidelity to God be waived at man's pleasure.

8. **Thou art our Father**—To the very few thou art the spiritual Father. The confession here reaches the point when God accepts, and becomes a heavenly Father. **Clay**—In the hands of God, as moulder, are all penitent men when God *does* accept, and then he forms them by discipline to the character they should have. God works creatively and renewingly in and upon all who will let him. To choose is our work. He chooses *not* for us. We yield our rebellion. He does not this for us; but if we continue obedient he does all the rest.

9 Be not ^o wroth very sore, O LORD, neither remember iniquity for ever: behold, see, we beseech thee, ^p we are all thy people. **10** Thy holy cities are a wilderness, Zion is a wilderness, ^a Jerusalem a desolation. **11** ^r Our holy and our beautiful house, where our fathers praised thee, is burned up with fire: and all ^s our pleasant things are laid waste. **12** ^t Wilt thou refrain thyself for these

^o Psa. 74. 1, 2; 79. 8.—^p Psa. 79. 13.—^a Psa. 79. 1.—^r 2 Kings 25. 9; 2 Chron. 36. 19; Psalm 74. 7.—^s Ezek. 24. 21, 25.

9. Be not wroth very sore—That is, mitigate thy wrath, deserved by us as a nation. **We are all thy people**—The idea *national* merges into the idea *spiritual*. All adhering to, and now praying to, him, are the spiritual Israel; and the prayer is, "Because we adhere and pray to thee, *spare us!*"

10, 11. Thy holy cities are a wilderness—In the interest of anti-super-naturalism many German and some English interpreters claim support from these verses. They advocate a pseudo-Isaiah, an unknown prophet who lived at or before the time of the Exile, and wrote these later prophecies. They assume miracle and predictive prophecy to be impossible, and that Isaiah, who wrote seven hundred years prior to events and facts here delineated, cannot be the author. This is a cool begging of the whole question; and, being so, is unworthy of further notice. **Our holy...house...burned**—The reference here is to the burning of the temple. But which temple? The first one was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar, the second by the Romans in A. D. 70, besides being twice polluted—first by Syrians, and next by the Romans. Nothing shows it certain that the temple referred to was the one destroyed by the Babylonians, but the description of the burning and the long unrestored desolation points most suitably to the ruin effected by the Romans. The "holy cities" apply more seemingly to those of Jerusalem and Judah. This view renders more impressive the deep confession of the chapter and the closing appeal of the people to God as their Father, and to

things, O LORD? "wilt thou hold thy peace, and afflict us very sore?"

CHAPTER LXV.

I ^a AM sought of *them that* asked not *for me*; I am found of *them that* sought me not: I said, Behold me, behold me, unto a nation *that* ^b was not called by my name. **2** ^c I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebell-

^t Chap. 42. 14.—^u Psalm 83. 1.—^v Rom. 9. 24-26, 30; 10. 20; Eph. 2. 12, 13.—^b Chap. 63. 19.—^c Rom. 10. 21.

his power as of a potter over the clay.

12. Wilt thou refrain thyself—That is, refuse to render aid in such extremity. It seems like a tender, deprecating, but not hopeless, remonstrance. It does not express despair. There is a faint, lingering confidence that God will yet be pitiful, and the next chapter gives the key as to how the pity and the help are to come.

CHAPTER LXV.

THE ANSWER OF REPROOF AND PROMISE, chap. lxv.

The foregoing prayer is to be answered not in terms of the petition, but by the destruction of the fleshly Israel, and the reinforcing of the remnant that is to be left by the larger hosts of the spiritual Israel, comprised of other believing Jews, and great numbers of converted Gentiles.

1, 2. Sought of them that asked not—The first verse refers to the Gentiles; the second to the Jews. So St. Paul in Rom. x, 20, 21. The rendering of Delitzsch is: "I was discernible to those who did not inquire." They had the ability to apprehend God from natural reason, and from pervasive influence of the ever-revealing Logos. **Found of them that sought me not**—"The grace of God, that bringeth salvation," which "hath appeared to all men," (Titus ii. 10,) was a gift to heathen consciences, and when Messianic light first dawned on the world very many heathen welcomed it. But the Jew, with light, promise, and entreaty, during all his history, was still wont to walk in his

ious people, which walketh in a way *that was not good*, after their own thoughts; **3** A people ^dthat provoketh me to anger continually to my face; ^ethat sacrificeth in gardens, and burneth incense ^fupon altars of brick; **4** ^gWhich remain among the graves, and lodge in the monuments; ^hwhich eat swine's flesh, and ⁱbroth of

^d Deut. 32. 21.—^e Chap. 1. 20; 66. 17; Lev. 17. 5.—^f Heb. *upon bricks*.—^g Deut. 18. 11.—^h Or, *pieces*.

own light, and withhold himself from God. He was of a rebellious nature, as a whole, to the last.

3-5. Sacrificeth in gardens—Entering on heathen worship in the face of Jehovah's temple, within the precincts of Jerusalem—perhaps within the courts of great houses wherein were gardens. In this, daring impiety

abominable *things is in their vessels*; **5** ^hWhich say, Stand by thyself, come not near to me; for I am holier than thou. These *are a smoke in my* ⁱnose, a fire that burneth all the day. **6** Behold, ⁱit is written before me: ^kI will not keep silence, ^lbut will recompense, even recompense into their bosom,

^h Matt. 9. 11; Luke 5. 30; 18. 11; Jude 19.—ⁱ Or, *anger*.—^j Deut. 32. 34; Mal. 3. 16.—^k Psa. 50. 3.—^l Psa. 79. 12; Jer. 16. 18; Ezek. 11. 21.

is charged. Or, **upon altars of brick**, extemporized on the tiled roofs of houses, whereon incense to idols was burned. Jeremiah xix, 13; xxxii, 29. **Among the graves**—Now little known or understood as an ancient practice, but perhaps for purposes of *necromancy*, by persons believing that thoughts from the dead could thus be obtained.



SEPULCHRES.

In...monuments—In crypts or sepulchres, wherein they lodged for the night, with like ends in view. **Swine's flesh**—Used in idol worship, but abominable to the Hebrews. It is difficult to explain, from present knowledge, some of these allusions. Some think certain mysteries were involved in them, in which devotees assumed a sanctity, and said to others, **Stand by ...for I am holier than thou**. It is

precarious to apply these things to Pharisees in Christ's time, though the phrase may have then become a proverb, and applicable to the Pharisees.

6, 7. Behold—Something very important. **It is written**—Or, recorded. Probably for retribution soon to occur. For character as above portrayed *shall* be visited with deserved decree, or doom. It is poured **into their bosom**. "Their bosom" may refer to an orien-

7 Your iniquities, and ^m the iniquities of your fathers together, saith the LORD, "which have burned incense upon the mountains, ^o and blasphemed me upon the hills: therefore will I measure their former work into their bosom.

8 Thus saith the LORD, As the new wine is found in the cluster, and *one* saith, Destroy it not; for ^p a blessing *is* in it: so will I do for my servants' sake, that I may not destroy them all. 9 And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains: and nine ^q elect shall inherit it, and my servants shall dwell there. 10 And ^r Sharon shall be a fold of flocks,

m Exod. 20. 5.—*n* Ezek. 18. 6.—*o* Ezek. 20. 27, 28.—*p* Joel 2. 14.—*q* Verses 15. 22; Matt. 24. 22; Rom. 11. 5, 7.—*r* Chap. 33. 9; 35. 2.—*s* Josh. 7. 24, 26; Hos. 2. 15.—*t* Chap. 56. 7; 57. 13:

tal way of drawing up the loose garment, so as to make a capacious sack around the chest. See Ruth iii, 15.

8. Not all are to be so served. For, as an occasional **cluster** is ripe, and **new wine** (ever regarded as a blessing) **is in it** all the vintage season, so, in this mass of corrupted Israel is a small undefiled group, worthy to be culled out and saved. In a general way, Christ's time and ministry are here very aptly illustrated; but that the prophet distinctly and exclusively meant this, may be venturesome to assert, unless it be viewed as perspective prophecy.

9, 10. **Seed out of Jacob...Judah**—"Out of Jacob and...Judah" (which means the faithful few taken from the whole body of Israelites) the small worthy number (verses 7, 8) shall prove to be the "handful of corn upon the top of the mountains," the fruit whereof "shall shake like Lebanon, and they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth," (Psa. lxxii, 16, 17,) enduring in glorious fertility as long as the sun and moon endure. And the whole land shall be in peace, from **Sharon** in the west, to the **valley of Achor**, near Jericho. Joshua vii, 24.

11, 12. **Ye are they that forsake the Lord**—Freely paraphrased, the passage is thus: "But as for you, ye forsakers of God, ye men who forget my holy mountain, (chap. ii, 1-5,) ye who set (or lay out) viands upon tables for a troop, (*Gad*, supposed by Gese-

and ^s the valley of Achor a place for the herds to lie down in, for my people that have sought me.

11 But *ye are* they that forsake the LORD, that forget ^t my holy mountain, that prepare ^u a table for that ^v troop, and that furnish the drink offering unto that ^w number. 12 Therefore will I number you to the sword, and ye shall all bow down to the slaughter: ^x because when I called, ye did not answer; when I spake, ye did not hear; but did evil before mine eyes, and did choose *that* wherein I delighted not. 13 Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, my servants shall eat, but ye

ver. 25.—*u* Ezek. 23. 41; 1 Cor. 10. 21.—*v* Or, *Gad*.—*w* Or, *Meni*.—*x* 2 Chron. 36. 15, 16; Prov. 1. 24; chap. 66. 4; Jer. 7. 13; Zech. 7. 7; Matt. 21. 34-43.

nus, Delitzsch, and many others to signify fortune of varying degrees, the difference occurring like that of the metric system, for example, according to popular estimate among nations,) and ye men who pour libations to *Meni*, (or, destiny, the goddess who numbers the *fates* of men; so deemed by the authorities named above;) so will I number you as destined to the **sword**, and ye all shall to **slaughter** bow, because ye paid me no heed when I called you (away from sun and planet worship, in the interest of this superstition about fortune,) and ye heard me not when I spake to you," (by way of rebuke for the same.) Further space cannot here be given to *Gad*, rendered **troop**, and to *Meni*, rendered **number**; but a common opinion obtains among investigators, with only slightly varying shades, that they refer to the superstition bearing meanings as above stated, chiefly involving sun and star or planet worship, which is supposed to have been of wide extent—at least as far as from Assyria and Babylon to Egypt. But allusions to it in the Bible are few indeed, and very obscure. See Gen. xxx, i; Job xxxi, 26.

13, 14. The turn given to idolatrous feastings (verses 11, 12) suggested a course of figures illustrative of the different "fortunes" of the godly and ungodly: their meaning is, "My people shall be satisfied with the rich abundance I shall give, while ye with

O. T.

shall be hungry: behold, my servants shall drink, but ye shall be thirsty: behold, my servants shall rejoice, but ye shall be ashamed: **14** Behold, my servants shall sing for joy of heart, but ye shall cry for sorrow of heart, and ^wshall howl for ^avexation of spirit. **15** And ye shall leave your name ^xfor a curse unto ^ymy chosen: for the Lord God shall slay thee, and ^zcall his servants by another name: **16** ^aThat

^w Matt. 8. 12; Luke 13. 28. — ^a Heb. *breaking*.
^x Jer. 29. 22; Zech. 8. 13. — ^y Vs. 9, 22.
^z Chap. 62. 2; Acts 11. 26. — ^a Psa. 72. 17; Jer. 4. 2.

momentary idolatrous pleasures shall pass into destitution and abandonment. My people, from first to last, shall possess unfailing springs of joy; but ye shall be irredeemably bowed with heart sorrow, despite your cries or howlings for relief, for ever to be unavailing." This proved true to the bold, bad Jews, down to their final experiences and ineffective struggles with the Romans.

15, 16. Ye shall leave your name for a curse unto my chosen — "Name for a curse," is that by which an imprecation is called on one's own head if he do not what he pledges to do, or if he do what he pledges himself *not* to do. *Canaan* is such a curse; "let what *Canaan* imports befall me, if," etc. **He who blesseth** — That is, one who invokes blessings on himself does so in the name, or in the personal attributes, of the true God. He neither needs nor desires any blessing except as the God of truth is willing to bestow it. Calling for a blessing in the name of an idol is invoking a curse. So then, every oath made, or any good asked for, is valid, is acceptable, only as it is made or asked in the name of the God of truth. *Swearing* and *blessing*, in this sense, are therefore acts of worship of the God of truth. They are acts of self-consecration and prayer to him. When these become universal with Jew and Gentile, then, and by very reason of their being so, **the former troubles are forgotten**. There is no more retribution for sin. All have become the spiritual Israel — the faithful followers of the true God.

17-19. Behold, I create new

he who blesseth himself in the earth shall bless himself in the God of truth; and ^bhe that sweareth in the earth shall swear by the God of truth; because the former troubles are forgotten, and because they are hid from mine eyes.

17 For, behold, I create ^cnew heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor ^dcome into mind.

18 But be ye glad and rejoice for ever

^b Deut. 6. 13; Psa. 63. 11; chap. 19. 18; 45. 23; Zeph. 1. 5. — ^c Chap. 51. 16; 66. 22; 2 Pet. 3. 13; Rev. 21. 1. — ^d Heb. *come upon the heart*.

heavens and a new earth — Viewing such a glorious restoration as a new creation, Jehovah is represented as saying: I work a wondrous change; it is a new state of Messianic glory. "The prophet had previously declared that mighty changes on the one hand would take place in consequence of severe judgments, and of glorious saving grace on the other." "The prophet manifestly distinguishes stadia in the accomplishment of salvation, though he says nothing of their relative times. Objects which are represented in one perspective on different planes, so that those in the background can be seen through the intervening spaces of those in the foreground, appear to be on one plane to him who regards them at a distance. We can here, also, distinguish three really distinct stadia, although the prophet in no way indicates a difference of time. The first stadium he describes, verses 9, 10. He then speaks of again taking possession of the holy land. This was first accomplished by the return from exile. He brings us, in verses 13-16, to another stadium. In it he sees the wicked and the godly together; but he perceives the godless Israel judged, and cursed, and the elect that are saved from the judgment called by another name. We enter on the third stadium, verse 17. In it every thing becomes new. A new higher life pervades the whole of nature. To this highest stadium the preceding are related as organic preparation." — *Nügelbach*. The old mixed state of affairs shall be forgotten through the abounding joy of the new. **Be ye glad and rejoice** —

in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. **19** And ^aI will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the ^cvoice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying. **20** There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die a hundred years old; ^ebut the sinner *being* a hundred years old shall be accursed. **21** And ^fthey shall build houses, and inhabit *them*; and they shall

plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. **22** They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for ^gas the days of a tree *are* the days of my people, and ^hmine elect ⁱshall long enjoy the work of their hands. **23** They shall not labour in vain, ^knor bring forth for trouble; for ^lthey *are* the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them. **24** And it shall come to pass, that ^mbefore they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.

^a Chap. 62. 5.—^c Chap. 35. 10; 51. 11; Rev. 7. 17; 21. 4.—^e Eccles. 8. 12.—^g Lev. 26. 16; Deut. 28. 30; chap. 62. 8; Amos 9. 14.—^h Psa. 92. 12.—ⁱ Verses 9, 15.

^h Hebrew, *shall make them continue long, or, shall wear out*.—^k Deuteronomy 28. 41; Hosea 9. 12.—^l Chapter 61. 9.—^m Psalm 32. 5; Daniel 9. 21.

(Chap. li, 11, 16,) because it is not, "I will create," but, "I am creating." Not a happiness for a day or a year, but for ever. **Jerusalem**—Renewed Jerusalem—the ever appropriate symbol-seat of prosperity and joy; the Church of the living God, under the rule of love and peace in the Holy Ghost.

The same thought continues in verse 19. Jehovah shall rejoice in his people, and his people in him. No more occasion for sorrow and weeping to his people; nor for him aught on their account to grieve over.

20. No more... an infant of days—There is considerable variety of not very clear comment on this passage. Nor is it easy to be made clear. Evidently the thread of illustration is not broken from verse 17, wherein Jehovah, under poetic imagery, is creating a new heaven and a new earth—perhaps even from verse 13, in which contrast is drawn between the status of the righteous and that of the unrighteous. In verse 20 the characteristic blessedness of the new order of things in the great future is that of longevity: "No more thence (from holy Jerusalem) shall be (rather, *shall go*, perhaps to burial) an infant of days." To agree with second clause of this verse this must mean: No one shall die in infancy. The old man and the one now an infant shall alike enjoy the full covenant blessing made to Abraham when he was a hundred years old. (And even if early death perchance occur, it shall be no

bar to the promise of the inheritance. Gen. xvii, 17.) In the second clause comes the contrast, like that of verses 13–16. **For the child shall die a hundred years old**—This seems to have a meaning touching child-likeness in simplicity, truthfulness, sincerity, and standing in a right relationship with God for a hundred years, or for an indefinite length of life. But every sinner, though "a hundred years old," shall die **accursed**. His long life has nothing in it to redeem his character from disgrace.

21, 22. Not build, and another inhabit—As against Deut. xxviii, 15–68, and Lev. xxvi, 14–46, (which see,) here is a promise of permanent blessedness in the new order of things. Like Lebanon's cedars, symbols of everlastingness, so shall the lives of the righteous go on to indefinite years. The final grand Messianic period shall yield unceasing enjoyment.

23. They shall not labour in vain—Another figure denoting permanent enjoyment. No certain wearying for an uncertain good. They shall be **blessed of the Lord** with prosperity temporal and spiritual, **and their offspring with them**.

24. Before they call, I will answer—With unclouded consciousness of union with God, they shall realize certain possession of blessings, without need or occasion of calling for them. Such is the character of the faith of Christian adoption—a state covering the whole scope of ever-advancing religious life.

25 The "wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: " and dust *shall be* the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord.

n Ch. 11. 6, 7, 9. — o Gen. 3. 14. — a 1 Kin. 8. 27;

25. The wolf and the lamb shall feed together—Here is an allusion to chap. xi, 6, 7, 9, there connected with the vision of Immanuel, here connected with Isaiah's closing prophetic message. Here the figures are abridged in number, but they bear a similar, indeed identical, meaning in both, as to the moral state of the world intended in the description in both places. Herein are links binding together the two great sections of a one great prophetic system by one and the same great prophet. **And dust shall be the serpent's meat**—This is a unique addition to the passage in chap. xi. It alludes to the two main features of the earliest promise—the gift of the Seed of the woman and the sentence upon the old serpent. Gen. iii, 14, 15. The allegory has this meaning: While all untamed natures among human souls blend together in harmony and peace under Messiah's rule, the primeval curse shall rest with ever-increasing weight upon Satan—figured as a serpent—and he become at length completely vanquished, wriggling powerless and harmless, biting only the dust on which he helplessly affects to crawl.

CHAPTER LXVI.

THE FULL REDEMPTION OF ZION:
INVOLVING THE LAST CONFLICT AND
DELIVERANCE.

The principle laid down in chapter lxvi and chapter i of these bodies of prophecy by Isaiah, is one and the same, as well as of the same historical scope. It is a condemnation of ceremonial superstitions of all times and of all nations, but especially of the Jews from the days of the prophets onward, through times of temple building and rebuilding, (by Solomon, Zerubbabel, and Herod,) into

CHAPTER LXVI.

THUS saith the Lord, "The heaven *is* my throne, and the earth *is* my footstool: where *is* the house that ye build unto me? and where *is* the place of my

2 Chr. 6. 18; Matt. 5. 34, 35; Acts 7. 48, 49; 17. 24.

the times of Christ and his apostles, with varying applications in every later age.

This last chapter is a distinct prophecy, the note on which it first strikes being in some sort different from that of any preceding discourse. Yet there are several points in it which coincide with those of chap. lxv. There is the same line of demarcation in both chapters between worldly and pious Israelites, and verse 12 of that chapter is repeated in verse 4 of this one. As a whole, it is an express prediction of a complete change from one dispensation—the Mosaic—to another, the fully installed Messianic; with little or no doubt that the accumulating sway of the Messianic is held in view by the prophet to its victorious consummation.

1. Heaven is my throne... earth is my footstool—This is a restatement of doctrines made familiar at the dedication of the first temple, (see 1 Chron. vi,) and often elsewhere repeated, as well as everywhere implied in Holy Scripture. See Stephen's speech, Acts vii, especially. God's empire is the universe; the indefinite expanse above is his throne, or the scene in which his sovereignty is in exercise; and the earth is his footstool, (Acts vii, 49,) or the scene extended so as to take in the panorama of the scheme of redemption. Being thus everywhere present, how is he to be located in a man-made temple? How weak such a mistake regarding the divine Being! The occasion of the words in this verse appears to have been the prophet's far-seeing view of the Jews' worldly pride in the newly repaired and gorgeously ornamented temple under Herod the Great, at Christ's advent. The temple of Christ's body was to be the one only temple of sole and solid interest to

rest? **2** For all those *things* hath mine hand made, and all those *things* have been, saith the LORD: ^b but to this *man* will I look, ^c *even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and* ^d *trembleth at my word.* **3** ^e *He that killeth an ox is as if he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb, as if he cut off a dog's neck; he that offereth an oblation, as if he offered swine's blood; he that burneth incense, as if he blessed an idol. Yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul*

delighteth in their abominations. **4** I also will choose their ^f *delusions, and will bring their fears upon them; because when I called, none did answer; when I spake, they did not hear: but they did evil before mine eyes, and chose that in which I delighted not.*

5 Hear the word of the LORD, ^h *ye that tremble at his word; Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name's sake, said, 'Let the LORD be glorified: but he shall appear to your joy,*

^b Chap. 57. 15; 61. 1.—^c Psalm 34. 18; 51. 17.—^d Ezra 9. 4; 10. 3; Proverbs 28. 14; verse 5.—^e Chapter 1. 11.—^f Or, *kid*.—^g Deuteronomy 23. 18.

² Heb. *maketh a memorial of*. Lev. 2. 3.—³ Or, *devices*.—^g Prov. 1. 24; Chapter 65. 12; Jer. 7. 13.—^h Verse 2.—ⁱ Chapter 5. 19.—^k 2 Thess. 1. 10; Titus 2. 13.

the world, an effective and enduring shrine before which a world of lost men should bow in worship and supplication for mercy. This is such a place which God seeks for his rest.

2. All those things hath mine hand made—The heavens and the earth just mentioned, the universe created by me—those are to me an infinitely more magnificent temple than man can make. **But to this man will I look**—The man of humble, contrite, reverent spirit, who is tremblingly penitent before me—to him will I give heed—not to you, proud, conceited worldlings, who hypocritically affect to worship Jehovah in profane, though professedly sacred, grandeur. To all such I give no heed.

3. But as to men of undevout character, who do not seek God with broken hearts—hearts crushed under a sense of sin—their sacrifices are an offence to Jehovah and a curse to themselves. **He that killeth an ox is as if he slew a man**—Here follow three other similar propositions, having for their subjects things required in religious offerings under the ritual law: all together, they are the ox, the lamb, the oblation, and offering of incense. Things offset against these are utterly forbidden by the law, being in themselves abominable. They are the human sacrifice, the blood of swine, the breaking the neck of a dog, and blessing an idol—all of which call for what in themselves raise the divine horror, instead of the divine compassion. And they of the undevout Jews are herein said to sacrifice what is

equivalent to these abominations when they formally attempt to sacrifice at all. In **spirit** they are gross idolaters, (see chap. i, 11–14,) and the conclusion seems to be, that it is time a ritual institution, abused like this, should be abolished for ever. It has ever helped the humble and penitent worshipper of Jehovah, though he needs it no more since the world's Great Sacrifice has come, and covers all his sins. But the undevout ones worship only in the *letter*—the spirit of the law they trample under foot, and thereby they *profane* the Almighty Saviour.

4. Choose their delusions—"Delusions"—rather, *devices*—consists of still offering ritual worship now that its original intent is all removed from it. The born, crucified, and risen Messiah, to whom it had pointed in its symbols and types, has taken its place. **Because**—From this point the language is the same as that of chap. lxxv, 12.

5. Ye that tremble—These are Jehovah's true followers. There were many such in Israel when Messiah came. To these he now turns. In these the true Israel is to be continued, and they are assured that though their unbelieving countrymen may cast them out with hatred and persecution for a time, their spite will soon work to their own confusion and destruction as a corporate nation. Every receiver of Messiah they reject from temple and synagogue, and they say in respect to them, **Let the Lord be glorified**. The Pharisees persecuted, and prayed this prayer! Time cor-

and they shall be ashamed. **6** A voice of noise from the city, a voice from the temple, ¹a voice of the LORD that rendereth recompense to his enemies. **7** Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child. **8** ^mWho hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children. **■** Shall I bring to the birth, and not

^l Chap. 34. 8; 59. 18.—^m Chap. 64. 4; 2 Cor. 2. 9.—¹ Or, *beget*.

rects delusion and sincerity, passing, hand in hand, together. So St. Paul, from experience, believed. The self-righteousness of the Jews in Christ's time brought upon them a terrible deception; yet many were no doubt honest, and thought they were doing God service in persecuting the disciples of Christ. But the mass of the people were bitter toward the faithful remnant, and their prayer probably meant this: We persecute, it is true, but no doubt God will be glorified in your case, and we shall see your salvation notwithstanding. (Bitterly ironical here, as in chapter v, 19.) "But they (who thus speak) shall themselves be confounded by what they now consider so incredible."—*Alexander*.

6. A voice of the Lord—It would seem as if the mock prediction is coming to pass in a way the persecutors little counted on. There would seem to be a leap of time here to the destruction of Jerusalem. **A voice of noise**—Or, sound of war from the city—from Jerusalem herself; the shock and tumult of battle by the Romans, A. D. 70. There is a triple sound of battle:—one from the temple, as well as from the city, and one from Jehovah. It is as a roar of armies rushing to deadly conflict, with God as the Unseen Leader.

7-9. Before she—That is, Zion. Before she came to such throes as described above, she brought forth a **man child**. Some suppose the birth of Jesus Christ is here intended. Other, more consistently, hold, in accordance with chapter xlix, 18-23, where

*cause to bring forth? saith the LORD: shall I cause to bring forth, and shut *the womb*? saith thy God. **10** ⁿRejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her: **11** That ye may suck, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations; that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the ^oabundance of her glory. **12** For thus saith the LORD, Behold, ^oI will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream:

ⁿ Chap. 44. 23; 64. 18; Rom. 15. 9, 12.—^o Or, *brightness*.—^o Chap. 48. 18; 60. 5.

the thought is substantially the same as here, that Zion already is beginning to be the joyful mother of a strong host of converts from Jews and Gentiles. **Who hath heard such a thing**—Such an increase of Zion's children is a marvel. **Shall a nation be born at once**—It has never before so occurred. In the prophet's eye the world, according to the divine order, is soon to be ready for such an event. **Bring to the birth**—On his part God has conducted human history so as to fully inaugurate the gospel age through and among all peoples. **Man child**—Every one of the human kind now entitled to the benefits of Christ's salvation. The new dispensation takes in all mankind collectively as the one "man child." Faithful co-operation between man and Messiah shall now be fruitful of grandest ingatherings to Jehovah, and of universal joy through earth and heaven.

10, 11. Rejoice ye with Jerusalem—"Jerusalem is now a happy mother, rejoicing that a son is born to her—a birth which really means a nation—a new and world-embracing Zion. Now therefore let her friends gather round her with their hearts of glowing sympathy and words of grateful cheer. Let those who have wept in her grief rejoice in her joy. Remarkably these re-joyicing friends are accounted as among her infant children, still clinging to a dear mother's bosom to feast there at the **full breasts** of her glory."—*Cowles*.

12. Peace...like a river—Her unbroken spiritual prosperity is to be as

then shall ye suck, ye shall be borne upon her sides, and be dandled upon her knees. **13** As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem. **14** And when ye see this, your heart shall rejoice, and your bones shall flourish like an herb: and the hand of the Lord shall be known toward his ser-

p Chap. 60. 16.—*q* Chapter 49. 22; 60. 4.—*r* Ezek. 37. 1.

an ever-full and sometimes an overflowing stream, like the Nile, or the Euphrates, each in its sphere the chief of oriental rivers. The words, **I will extend peace to her like**, etc., lead some to render the phrase: "I will extend, or cause to spread over her, an overwhelming prosperity ('peace,' a synonyme for prosperity) like an overflowing stream." In this way the figure is changed somewhat more than the Hebrew can admit, except tropically; but the idea seems more forcible, and equally beautiful. **Shall ye suck**—These words resume the figure of the preceding verse, denoting Zion-Jerusalem as the figuratively original source of revealed knowledge respecting the great salvation to be shared by all. The objects of address in this speech are the sons of Zion, to be gathered out of all nations.

13, 14. As one whom his mother comforteth—See note on chapter xlix, 15, where a similar image occurs. **In Jerusalem**—As the spiritual nourisher, consolation shall come to you. **When ye see this**—This great accession from among Gentiles. **Your heart shall rejoice**—Not Gentiles, but the ever-faithful, true Israelite is addressed. In all of Zion's troubles hitherto he had mourned with much sorrow for her. Now that God favours Zion again, and comforts her, he rejoices, he exults. **Your bones shall flourish**—This singular image is one indicating that the whole bodily frame becomes invigorated. Strength is infused into it. This physical effect arises from the spirit being exultant over God's power in exercise for good to Zion's children, for evil to Zion's enemies. **The hand of the Lord**—

vants, and his indignation toward his enemies. **15** For, behold, the Lord will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire. **16** For by fire and by his sword will the Lord plead with all flesh: and the slain of the Lord shall be many. **17** They that sanctify themselves, and

s Chap. 9. 5; 2 Thess. 1. 8.—*t* Chap. 27. 1.—*u* Chap. 65. 3, 4.

The Lord's power: this shall protect them, and shall punish their enemies.

15, 16. Will come with fire—The figure partakes of imagery from Sinai—a figure always at hand when demonstration of great trial scenes are before us. Chap. xxxiv, 3. **For by...his sword**—As a mighty warrior. **Plead with all flesh**—With all men who are hostile to God and his Zion. The tenor of the words in this passage shows God's pleading "with all flesh," that is, representatively with the whole hostile Jewish race, to be not literally in words of reasoning, but in terrific pleadings (so to call it) of "fire" and "sword." Such fierce judgment came at last to the Jews as a nation, at which time the slain of the Lord was indeed many. Who will say this prophecy was not terribly fulfilled at the destruction of Jerusalem? But prophecy grows in fulfilment, and who will say the events of A. D. 70 were not a type of after terrific fulfilments in the form of trial-crises, wherein fire and sword played their part, involving Gentile and Jewish atrocities alike? As to what befell, in the sphere of prophecy, the mass of Israel, see Romans ix-xi.

17. The judgments of verses 15, 16, likewise fall on nations or heathen as well as on Jews who still voluntarily drop themselves from the election of grace, and become measurably like the heathen. They that sanctify themselves, and purify themselves in the gardens—The same as described in chap. lxy, 3, 4. These are the ancient idolaters among the Jews, of whom so much has been said in these prophecies. Their sins, past, present, and future, are considered as in one group, for which judgment of "fire"

purify themselves in the gardens * behind one tree in the midst, eating swine's flesh, and the abomination, and the mouse, shall be consumed together, saith the LORD. **18** For I know their works and their thoughts: it shall come, that I

6 Or, one after another.

and "sword" is executed. **Gardens**—Enclosures containing trees and shrubs and aromatic plants, belonging to the wealthy, especially kings and nobles. When idolatry became common in Palestine these were used for polluting, idol worship. **Behind one tree in the midst**—The word "tree" is not in the Hebrew text, but the reading is: Behind one, one, or one after one. It is generally believed one file leader is the proper idea; he standing in the "midst," giving instruction and direction in idolatrous procession along the groves of the garden, where swine's flesh is sacrificed and eaten, with the abomination, and the mouse. What these were is very difficult to ascertain; but the sentiment indicates that nothing was too disgusting to be an object of idolatrous reverence in the days of the wicked kings of Israel and Judah. The retributive judgments of these verses are seemingly generic, and do their chastising work along the whole course of history pertaining to the abuses of Jehovah's true religion. This entire subject is quite inscrutable still to the ablest critics.

18. For I know their works and their thoughts—There is great abruptness in these words, and they indicate very excited emotion. Exact rendering from the original makes the words stand thus: *And I—their works and their thoughts—it is come—to gather all the nations and the tongues—and they shall come and see my glory—And I—* This is followed by nothing. The ellipsis may be filled by *I know*, or, *I abhor*, or, *I know how to punish*, or, *I will consume*, taking this word from the "consumed" of the preceding verse. Each of these supplied words has its advocate among exegetes; others might also be added. It seems very fairly proper to supply the last here mentioned, *I will*

will gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come, and see my glory. **19** * And I will set a sign among them, and I will send those that escape of them unto the nations, to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, that draw the bow, to Tubal

v Luke 2. 34.

consume. Connexion with the foregoing verse suggests, and not a little authorizes it: "I will consume their works and their devices." What was so abruptly cut short off, through panting excitement, as it were, occasioned by a sudden emotion of abhorrence, is thus fittingly supplied: "It shall come. The decision is made. All nations (outside from apostate Israel) and tongues (from among the Gentiles) shall witness my glory, (that is, my almighty power,) manifested in the consumption of these apostates;" or, to "see my glory" may consist of conquests over apostate foes, and achievements of grace in his Church.

19. The achievements just named, no doubt, are the conversion of so large a part of the Gentiles. **I will set a sign**—Not an "ensign," (chap. xi, 12,) a rallying flag around which Gentiles are bidden to throng. It is one of the words used for *miracle*, the miracle of most extensive Gentile conversions, opened from the time of the great pentecostal occasion. **Acts ii. Will send those that escape of them**—Dispersed Jews and proselytes converted to Christ at the great feast of the pentecost, return as missionaries in every direction to their respective homes, which are here enumerated, but not exhaustively. **Tarshish**, (western end of the Mediterranean;) **Pul**, and **Lud**, (in Africa, Jer. xvi, 9;) **Tubal**, (in Northern Asia, Ezek. xxvii, 13, xxxii, 26, xxxviii, 2, 3, xxxix, 1;) **Javan**, (in Greece; and Ionian isles and maritime coasts, etc.) This includes the missionary results, not of the pentecostal occasion alone, but of the apostolic labours as well. **Escape of them**—These converted ones of Israel are of those on whom the fiery judgments of Jehovah were not to fall, as upon the apostate Jews. The prophet,

and Javan, *to* the isles afar off, that have not heard my fame, neither have seen my glory; * and they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles. **20** And they shall bring all your brethren * *for* an offering unto the LORD out of all nations upon horses, and in chariots, and in ⁷ litters, and upon mules, and upon swift beasts, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, saith the LORD, as the children of Israel bring an offering in a clean vessel into

²⁰ Mal. 1. 11.—²¹ Rom. 15. 16.—⁷ Or, *coach-ers*.—¹¹ Exodus 19. 6; chap. 61. 6; 1 Peter 2. 9; Rev. 1. 6.—²² Chap. 65. 17; 2 Peter 3. 13; Rev.

in these verses, writes of events in the manner of *foreshortened* prediction; that is, of events as occurring quite in his own times, or somewhat later, but which, in point of fact, extend into the far future. They reach, evidently, the apostolic age, and no doubt they qualifiedly cover ages beyond, during which missionary work shall be in demand for the conversion of the entire world—the scope of time required by St. Paul in Rom. x, xi.

20. They shall bring all your brethren for an offering—The order of the Hebrew text is, “They shall bring all your brethren” *out of all nations* “for an offering.” The writer is speaking still to, and in the verbal costume of, his own times. “They,” or men, *shall bring an offering*, or an oblation, *to Jehovah* at his holy mountain or Church at Jerusalem; the oblation being from far-off sections of the world as indicated by the modes of conveyance in early Jewish times. It is a sensible thought that “the spirit of this prophecy authorizes us to substitute for **horses and chariots**, railcars and steamships, and to assume that the transportation will be outward rather than inward; missionaries **going forth** into all the world, and not the nations themselves coming in to some great central Jerusalem.”—*Cowles, in loco*.

21, 22. And I will...take of them—These words connect closely with the heathen converts of the preceding verse. “Of them,” together with the “and,” show this clearly enough. **For priests...for Levites**—These are preachers of the atonement and reconciliation through the Messiah

the house of the LORD. **21** And I will also take of them for ⁷ priests *and* for Levites, saith the LORD. **22** For as ² the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the LORD, so shall your seed and your name remain. **23** And ^a it shall come to pass, *that* ^b from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, ^b shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the LORD. **24** And they

21. 1.—^a Zech. 14. 16.—⁸ Hebrew, *from new moon to his new moon, and from sabbath to his sabbath*.—^b Psa. 65. 2.

and Redeemer. Into the new Zion they are admitted, not by a Mosaic installation, but in virtue of their being made “kings and priests unto God” with all the believers in Jesus Christ—himself the great High Priest, Prophet, and King, in the new order of things—the **new heavens and...new earth**. So shall your seed and your name remain—This new order and constitution of the thoroughly established Messianic age has an unchangeable priesthood in Christ, and a perpetual seed and name in the body—the Church of Christ, of which he is head—with no distinction of Jew or Gentile. This view is fully substantiated by the unity of sense in the terms of this text or verse and the immediate context.

23. From one new moon to another—Literally, *as often as the moon cometh in its month*, in its time every month, at which time a festival (of the new moon) was held. **All flesh**—That is, *all nations*, shall come up to worship, as if at Jerusalem. Of course this is figurative. The prophet does not cease to be a Jew, to talk in Jewish costume, and to the comprehension of his own times. These new-moon festivals are not such as God hated in chap. i, 13, because in those far future times to which they refer their original intent will be observed. The meaning clearly is, that millions over the earth will statedly and habitually be truly observant of the purposes and services of a living, spiritual Christianity. The sabbath will be observed, and God will be worshipped “in spirit and in truth.” The divine ordinances will be sacredly attended to, and insti-

shall go forth, and look upon "the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me: for their "worm shall not

die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh.

c Verse 16.

tutions for practical good to the world will be kept perpetually established.

24. **They shall go forth**—The restored of the true Israel, embracing all devout Jews and converted Gentiles, constitute a vast host, enclosed within the walls of the typical, but now holy, Jerusalem. They have been collected from all regions of the earth. Already Jehovah has closed fiery judgment with apostate Israel, and has gathered the corpses of "the slain of the Lord" into the Hinnom valley (now called Gehenna) below, there to have unending consumption by unquenched fire and never-dying worm. The happy denizens of Jerusalem are called to go forth and survey the scene. The place, once by our prophet called Tophet, (chap. xxx, 33,) and more fully so called by Jeremiah, (chaps. vii, 30-33, xix, 6-15,) to which also our Lord alludes, (Mark ix, 44, 46, 48,) was at one time the scene of Moloch worship; hence the name *Tophet*—a drum beaten to drown the cries of infants sacrificed to Moab's god, Moloch. Hence, too, the whole imagery here, that of illustrating the horrors of doom befalling apostates from the true God, and the future punishment to all who incorrigibly are defiant of Jehovah to the last.

For purposes of Isaiah's profound drama, herewith closed, this is a fitting and legitimate *monumental* scene; on this, want of space does not allow enlargement. It is, moreover, with some grotesqueness, a didactic scene. Pre-

d Mark 9. 44, 46, 48.

diction is in the scene, the object of which is, first, the New Jerusalem of the world to come; and second, the eternal misery of condemned ones. The picture is drawn in figures from the present world—figures from the present life adapted to the realities of the life to come. This, however, is just the distinction between the Old Testament and the New—the former bringing down the life to come to the end of this life, while the latter does just the opposite. (This thought is due to Delitzsch.) He says: "The New Jerusalem of our prophet has indeed a new heaven above it and a new earth under it, but it is only the old Jerusalem of earth lifted up to its highest glory and happiness; whereas the New Jerusalem of the Apocalypse comes down from heaven, and is therefore of a heavenly nature. In the former dwells the Israel that has been brought back from exile; in the latter, the risen Church of those who are written in the Book of Life. And whilst our prophet transfers the place in which the rebellious are judged to the neighbourhood of Jerusalem itself; in the Apocalypse the lake of fire in which the life of the ungodly is consumed, and the abode of God with men, are for ever separated. The Hinnom valley outside Jerusalem has become *Gehenna*, and this is no longer within the precincts of Jerusalem, because there is no need of any such example to the righteous who are for ever perfect."

INTRODUCTION TO BOOK OF JEREMIAH.

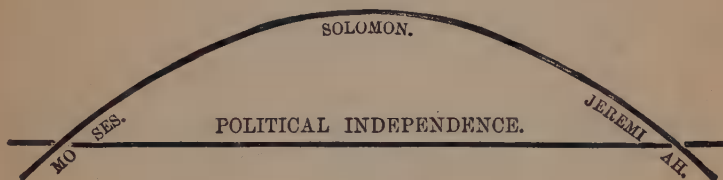
ANALYSIS.

I. The Author.

1. HIS TIMES. 2. HIS HISTORY.
3. HIS CHARACTER. 4. HIS WORK.

II. The Book.

1. ITS SUBJECT-MATTER. 2. ITS ORIGIN.
3. ITS STYLE. 4. ITS PLAN.



I. THE AUTHOR.

1. His Times.

THE above diagram shows the position of Jeremiah in Jewish history, which was the exact counterpart of that of Moses. The one stands in the glory of the sunrise; the other in the sombre hour of evening twilight, amid the lengthening shadows of the swiftly-coming night. The one brought to his people the evangel of liberty, and became himself the deliverer and leader out of dark and bitter thralldom; the other spoke words heavily laden with doom, and realized in his own experience the fearfulness of the calamities which he foretold. Moses was called to the difficult work of laying the foundation of an independent national existence; Jeremiah saw the splendid fabric which had been reared thereupon shattered and deserted;—a ruin alike eloquent of the grandeur of the past and the more spiritual and more enduring glory of the future. Out of ignorance, degradation, and misery, Moses evolved an earthly state of which God was the sovereign and head; to Jeremiah, with other prophets of the later period, was appointed the still more difficult work of bringing out of the ruins

of the temporal theocracy "the kingdom which cannot be moved," but abideth for ever.

The time in which Jeremiah commenced his work was one of quietness, indeed, and of seeming prosperity, but of real depression and humiliation. The kingdom which, under Solomon, had proudly spread itself out from the Euphrates to the Red Sea, had shrunk to the narrow limits of Southern Palestine—a mere patch of land, scarcely fifty miles square, in the hill country of Judea. So changed had it become, that its hope of safety and immunity was rather in its insignificance than in its invincible strength and resources.

In this little kingdom fearful devastation had been wrought by the army of Sennacherib in the first half of Hezekiah's reign. The story of this is told in the inscription on the Taylor cylinder, now kept in the British Museum. In this inscription Sennacherib proudly boasts that he had captured forty-six of Hezekiah's cities, and also his strongholds, and smaller towns in their neighbourhood without number; that he had carried away captive two hundred thousand one hundred and fifty people, together with horses, asses, camels, oxen, and sheep beyond number; that "like a bird in a cage he had shut up Hezekiah in Jerusalem, his royal city, and planted siege-towers against him; that he had diminished his kingdom by giving many of his cities to the kings of the Philistines; and finally, that he had exacted from him large tribute—"thirty talents of gold, eight hundred talents of silver, woven cloth scarlet embroidered, precious stones of large size, couches of ivory, movable thrones of ivory," and male and female slaves."—*Records of the Past*, vol. i, pp. 38, 39.

Now, when we take into consideration the merciless character of ancient warfare, we can well understand that such an inscription as this must indicate a fearful devastation for this land. The three quarters of a century which had since intervened had been for the most part years of recuperation. Returning prosperity had not been completely obstructed by the religious convulsions which marked the reign of Manasseh. Hence Josiah came to the kingdom in an era of returning good feeling and material prosperity, though it was still characterized by great and general corruption.

Many things combined to make the period of Jeremiah one of special interest and importance. He was called to the prophetic office in the time of Josiah, the glory of whose reign proved to be the sunset glow of the Judean kingdom. Psammetichus was again bringing up Egypt to the dignity of a first-rate power, thus making her at once a source of danger and of hope to Judea. In the century that was just closing Assyria had had a series of the most brilliant reigns in her entire history, embracing those of Sennacherib, Esar-haddon, and Asshur-

banipal; and yet even then, because of her weakness and dissensions within and her formidable foes without, she was tottering to her fall. The Medes, who under Arbaces had thrown off the yoke of Assyrian domination, were pushing their conquests, especially to the east and southeast, and were thus keeping themselves in training for the work they were so soon to do in achieving the conquest of the world. Babylon, too, was coming into notice as a formidable independent power. Within less than a quarter of a century, namely, in 606 B. C., Nabopolassar, king of Babylon, captured and destroyed Nineveh, thereby transferring the seat of empire from the Tigris to the Euphrates.

But it was a time of peril to Judea. There were strifes and dissensions within, and dangers without. Egypt on the one hand, and Babylon on the other, were ready to swallow her up. It was with her no longer a question of independence but of existence. "The struggles of the expiring kingdom of Judea are like those of a hunted animal; now flying, now standing at bay between two huge beasts of prey, which, while their main object is to devour each other, turn aside from time to time to snatch at the smaller nation that has crossed their midway path." The idolatrous and licentious rites of Baal and Astarte were upheld by an influential party of "the princes." The brazen statue of the god Moloch stood in the valley of Ben-Hinnom; and here was the furnace where children were made to pass through the fire. A statue of Astarte had been set up even within the sacred precincts of the temple, and, as we learn from Ezekiel, (viii, 3, 5, 14,) at the gate where was this "image of jealousy" might be seen women weeping for Thammuz. A general corruption infected the prophetic and priestly orders. The prophets prophesied falsely, and the priests bore rule by their means, and the people loved to have it so. So far from purging the land thoroughly and effectually from these idolatrous corruptions, the reformation of Josiah scarcely sufficed to suppress for any considerable time the more gross and revolting features of the pagan worship, even in Jerusalem itself.

We recognise at this period three distinct parties. The first consisted of "the princes" and their followers, who supported and protected the old idolatrous worship. The second, composed of the prophets and priests, adhered to the national faith, but corrupted it with magical rites, and maintained it in a spirit of hollow and perfunctory ritualism. The third was made up of choice spirits like-minded with Josiah and Jeremiah, who realized and deplored the prevailing corruption, and were earnestly seeking to effect a reformation. The last of these parties had gained a temporary ascendancy in the elevation to the throne of the young king Josiah. Conspicuous

among those who surrounded him were Shaphan the scribe, Hiliah the high priest, Huldah the prophetess, with her husband Shallum, the keeper of the temple precincts, and the prophet Jeremiah. In the twelfth year of his reign, which was the year preceding Jeremiah's call to the prophetic office, Josiah entered upon vigorous, and indeed violent, measures of reformation, cutting down the groves and breaking down the altars of Baalim, not only in Jerusalem, but also in the cities of Manasseh, and Ephraim, and Simeon, even unto Naphtali. He even went so far as to invade the sanctuary of the grave, and brought out the bones of the heathen priests and burned them on their altars in the presence of the people.

In the eighteenth year of Josiah's reign occurred that wonderful awakening which resulted from the finding of a copy of the Law when engaged in repairing the temple. That this was for some reason a notable copy of the Law is indicated by the history, but for what reason does not appear. It may have been the one original copy which was at first deposited in the side of the ark, not for use but for preservation. It may have been some later official copy which had been kept in the temple for use in the days of holy convocation, about which had gathered a wealth of interesting and sacred associations. But it could hardly be, as so many have been led to believe, simply the Book of Deuteronomy, which then, for the first time, came prominently to the notice of the Jewish people. And the commotion produced does not necessarily imply that the contents of this book of the Law were unfamiliar to the king and the leaders of the people; but so pointed and so terrific were its denunciations of the very practices then prevailing, and so intense was the light cast down into the abyss of their corruption, that they were thoroughly alarmed at the revelation. The result attests the strong religious feeling of the people, whose deepest convictions were still on the side of Jehovah and his truth. The king and the people solemnly renewed their covenant with God, and the passover which followed was the most remarkable religious pageant Jerusalem had witnessed since the days of Solomon.

At about this time occurred the memorable Scythian invasion, of which Herodotus gives a vivid account, though it is not mentioned in the sacred histories. Across the mountains, which seem to have been thrown up as the ramparts and defences of the earlier civilizations, these savage hordes poured as a resistless torrent into the land of Media, and thence into Assyria, Syria, and Palestine. They plundered the famous temple of Astarte at Ascalon; but, when at the very frontier of Egypt, they were bought off by Psammetichus, and returned to Media, where they bore sway for more than half a score of years. It is possible that we catch some glimpses of this fearful invasion by

strange men of fierce aspect from the distant north, in some of the imagery employed by Jeremiah, and also by Zephaniah and Habakkuk, and there is evidently a trace of it in the name Scythopolis for Bethshean in the historic books of Judith and the Maccabees.

More significant, and sadder in its results, was the invasion of Palestine and Syria by Pharaoh-Necho, B. C. 609. His object was to anticipate the rising power of Babylon by gaining possession of the regions bordering the Mediterranean, and Upper Mesopotamia. Josiah went out to meet him, and the encounter took place at Megiddo, the very locality where Thothmes III., almost a thousand years before, met and defeated a confederacy under the lead of the prince of Kadesh on the Kishon. Though disguised as a common soldier, for his greater safety, Josiah was fatally wounded, and died before reaching Jerusalem, whither his servants sought with all haste to take him. No sadder death had ever cast its shadow over the city of God. With Josiah expired the last hope for the Judean kingdom. He was buried with extraordinary solemnities, the funeral dirge being composed by Jeremiah himself, who doubtless, in this event, experienced one of the great sorrows of his life. "And Jeremiah lamented for Josiah; and all the singing men and the singing women spake of Josiah in their lamentations to this day, and made them an ordinance in Israel; and, behold, they are written in the lamentations." 2 Chron. xxxv, 25.

Four years later the victorious Egyptians met their Waterloo at Carchemish, where Nabopolassar, king of Babylon, in a great and decisive battle utterly defeated and routed them, and this virtually terminated Egyptian rule in Asia and the East.

2. The Prophet's History.

Three principal explanations have been given of the name Jeremiah. Jerome makes it from the radical *rûm*, (רומ,) *to be high*, and hence finds the import of it to be "the exalted of Jehovah." Gesenius makes it from the Chaldee root *r'mah*, (רמח,) which he understands to have, in Dan. vii, 9, the sense of *to set up*. This would give the interpretation, "whom Jehovah setteth up," or, "the appointed of Jehovah." But most expositors agree with Hengstenberg in making the name from *ramah*, (רמה,) in its ordinary sense of *to cast*, or *to throw*. This gives the sense, "Jehovah will throw," and finds in it a reminiscence of the triumphal song of Moses, (Exod. xv, 1,) "The horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea," and a pre-intimation of his own mission, which, as stated in Jer. i, 10, was to be "to throw down." Etymologies of this character are often merely fanci-

ful, and should be taken with caution, as words much used are likely to become more or less disguised in form.

Jeremiah is described as "son of Hilkiah, of the priests of Anathoth." From 2 Kings xxii and 2 Chron. xxxiv we learn that the name of the high priest in the eighteenth year of Josiah was Hilkiah; and hence many, such as Clement of Alexandria, Jerome, Kimchi, and Eichhorn, identify him with the father of Jeremiah. The one and only positive reason for this is the identity of name, and this is of very insignificant value. Against this view several considerations have been urged. 1) The vagueness of the phrase "of the priests of Anathoth." 2) The priests who resided at Anathoth, as we learn from 1 Kings ii, 26, belonged to the house of Ithamar, while the high priests were in the line of Eleazar and of the house of Phinehas. 1 Chron. xxiv, 3. 3) The family of the high priest would not be likely to reside at a distance from the city. 4) There is not in the book itself, either in the words of Jeremiah or of others, any intimation of this distinguished parentage, though it is evident that Jeremiah is regarded by all parties as a person of consequence. On the whole, then, we are compelled to conclude that there is no sufficient ground for connecting the family in which Jeremiah was born with the supreme religious office in the Hebrew commonwealth.

But we do know that he was by birth a priest before he was by special call and endowment a prophet, and hence that he shared the peculiar life and special culture of the priestly class. Shallum, his uncle, was the husband of Huldah the prophetess, and, with his wife, was conspicuous in the company of faithful ones and helpers in the reformation of Josiah. It is also to be noted that Ahikam, son of Shaphan the scribe, or secretary of state, who was himself intimately associated with Huldah the prophetess and Hilkiah the high priest, was throughout a steadfast and influential friend of Jeremiah. The priests and Levites were, in a special sense, the body-guard of the commonwealth; and hence the circle in which Jeremiah moved was one of patriotism and culture. He breathed an atmosphere of devotion to Jehovah, and to that State which the religion of Jehovah had created.

In seeking to estimate correctly the conditions which moulded the character and shaped the history of Jeremiah, we must not fail to take into account the place of his residence. Anathoth was a priests' city, situated scarcely four miles from the temple walls, and so, of course, intimately connected with the temple and the city. Hence Jeremiah lived from the first at the very heart of the nation's life, and yet in a quiet locality where was blended what is most characteristic in the life of city and of country. The ministries of nature combined with

the choicest human companionships to give a completeness to his culture. Now, when we put all these together—his priestly parentage and consequent culture in things of patriotism and religion; the privileged rank of life in which he stood, and the choice spirits with whom he associated; the place of his residence, as uniting the life of the country with that of the city; the inspiring traditions coming down from the prosperous reign of Hezekiah, and darker memories of the reign of Manasseh; his familiarity with the Law and with the writings of the earlier prophets—we have a general view of the forces which moulded Jeremiah's personal character.

From his mother's womb he was "sanctified" unto God. The news of his birth made his father "very glad." He describes himself as but "a child" when called to the prophetic office; though this language must not be too strongly pressed. It is certain that the call of God but articulated and intensified the impulses of his own heart, which was ever filled with lively concern for the spiritual welfare of his people. Though his call came when Josiah was just entering upon his work of religious reform, it is remarkable that we find in his discourses, as preserved, no plain allusion to this work. The principal record we have of the first twenty-two years of his public ministry consists in his own words, which had been written for preservation. Scarcely any mention is made, not even by allusion, to incidents of his personal history. But we have only to recognise his tender and sympathetic nature, his loneliness, his fidelity, and his intense solicitude for the welfare of his countrymen, to realize how eloquent is this silence. What alternations of hope and depression, of rapture and of agony, must have come to this prophet of God in the reforming period of Josiah, and in the reaction of apostasy under Jehoiakim!

The turning point in his personal history was the fourth year of Jehoiakim, (605-4 B. C.) From that time his face is turned definitely toward the Babylonish captivity. In that year many of his prophecies were reduced to writing, and when the book was read before the people, the priests and prophets were so enraged that they demanded him for death, as the prophet Urijah had already been executed by the command of the king himself. But he was protected by "the princes," who were less bitter and violent than the religious leaders.

Under Zedekiah he was arrested and shut up in prison, and remained in custody until the capture of Jerusalem, B. C. 588. Even in prison he persisted in declaring the word of God, and this led to his being thrown into a pit full of slime, where he must have speedily perished had he not been rescued through the good offices of Ebed-Melech, the Cushite royal eunuch.

When the city was taken, special directions were given by the
VOL. VII.—18 O. T.

Babylonian commander for the safety of Jeremiah, and he was finally set at liberty at Ramah. He went with the fugitives to Egypt, and the last distinct glimpse we have of him is at Tahpanes. As to his final fate we have no knowledge. One tradition is, that he was stoned by his own countrymen at Tahpanes, and this tradition is accepted by the Romish Church. Others say, that Alexander the Great brought his bones to be deposited in the new city Alexandria, which was soon to become such an influential centre of Jewish culture. The Jews have a tradition that on the conquest of Egypt by Nebuchadnezzar he, with Baruch, made his escape to Judea or Babylon, where he died in peace at a good old age. But incomparably more eloquent than these traditions is the perfect silence of Scripture. It was not necessary that this man of sorrows should die a violent death in order to be entitled to wear the crown of martyrdom.

3. The Prophet's Character.

As there is no one of the later prophets the details of whose life are so fully given, so there is no other whose character is so clearly defined in the popular conception. Many of the other prophets are for the most part merely voices of varying sweetness, compass, and power, speaking words of good or evil import; Jeremiah is a man of like passions with ourselves. In those marvellous frescoes on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, Michael Angelo has expressed his conception of the most conspicuous and representative of the prophets of the Old Testament, and this work has been an admiration and a study in all the subsequent centuries. But upon no other one of these does the mind pass judgment so promptly as upon that of Jeremiah. So positive and so well defined is the conception of every thoughtful Bible student as to this man, that he is ready at once to decide on any attempt to express his character. In this instance it can hardly fail to be favourable. He sits before us a grand and melancholy figure, thoughtful and absorbed, yet "quick in every fibre with the pervading fire of inspiration." His feet are crossed, his attitude is leaning, his long beard hangs down to his lap, his wrists are bent with that characteristic tension indicating suppressed excitement. He seems to be waiting—depressed, but obedient—for those awful messages which it was at once his glory and his grief to convey. He sits in the silence and gloom of the gathering storm, knowing that it will ere long burst upon the people and the land with destructive fury. August and impetuous as the organ of the divine utterance, he now sits in the darkness which is cast over him by the sufferings of others, experiencing a sorrow for their sins which they do not feel for their own.

We recognise in the character of Jeremiah a wonderful union of

seemingly opposite qualities. With a heart full of tenderness and sympathy, sensitive and delicate as a woman's, he joins a will of rock-like firmness. He combines in his character both Peter and John. He is Johannean in his simplicity, purity, spirituality, and tenderness; and Petrine in his quick human sympathies, his unquailing courage, and his resolute determination to stand in his lot. He was called to a life-and-death struggle with hoary abuses and influential and embittered foes; he came down into the deepest depths of personal suffering and humiliation; he experienced the keenest anguish in view of the calamities which were gathering thickly over Jerusalem and Judea; he was subjected to the mortification and distress of being thoroughly misunderstood by many of his countrymen, and maliciously misrepresented by others; and yet, amid it all, he stands at his post of duty faithfully and unflinchingly, though not always uncomplainingly. Of exquisite sensibility, constructed to suffer as few natures ever were, timid and desponding, "he was as fearless when he had to face the whole world as he was cast down and dispirited when alone with God."

The quality most prominent in his character is his religious patriotism. Indeed, with him, as with many another Hebrew, patriotism and religion were one. Devotion to God and to the theocracy were never, in his consciousness, discriminated from each other. Were it possible that he should be the author of Psalm cxxxvii, it would be accepted as a very just expression of what was most characteristic of him. None had ever a better right than he to say, "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy."

When we consider the position which Jeremiah occupied—at the lowest point in Jewish history—when we recognise the unspeakable loneliness of his lot in this crisis-hour of his nation's history—when we consider the contumely, scorn, and persecution that came upon him, not from his heathen enemies so much as from his own countrymen, even the priests and prophets and the men of Anathoth—and when we mark the spirit of fidelity to God with which he submits to it all—we are prepared to say, that, more than any other man in the Old Testament, he stands before us as a type of the suffering Messiah!

4. The Prophet's Work.

The great work to be done in the period of Jeremiah was to disconnect the truth of Jehovah and his kingdom from the political interests of the little kingdom of Judea, and thus prepare it to go forth

on its world wide mission. The material scaffolding by means of which the Jews, and humanity in them, had climbed up to a higher religious development must now be cast down. Up to this time Monotheism had been in large degree concreted with the facts and forms of life in a single land, and with the institutions planted there; the problem was, how to knock off these shackles and let the truth go absolutely free. In this work Jeremiah was the most conspicuous agent. And the fact that the results of the lives that were lived three thousand years ago in that little district east of the Mediterranean Sea, by a simple and uncultured people, have been builded into the fabric of human life all over the world, is an eloquent attestation to the faithfulness and success with which this work was done.

But no man was ever sent on a more unwelcome mission than Jeremiah. He was to be a prophet of evil to his own countrymen. Though an Israelite indeed, and an intense patriot, he was yet, under the divine direction, to give counsel and predict results which were understood to be in the interest of the enemies of his country. He is consequently charged with treachery and desertion, and his name cast out as evil. In a sense more bitter and trying than ordinarily falls to the lot of even leaders and reformers, he was misunderstood by those whose good opinion he highly prized. A prophet and a priest himself, the priests and prophets were his deadly enemies. And as his great Prototype, the suffering Son of God, entered upon his experience of rejection by men by being driven out from his native home in Nazareth, so Jeremiah is commanded by "the men of Anathoth," "Prophecy not in the name of the Lord, that thou die not by our hand." See chap. xi, 21. Thus did he become a stranger in his own land and time, in order that he might bring in a better time.

It is a satisfaction to know that this lonely and suffering worker came at last to be appreciated. The name which in his own time was cast out as evil is now one of the most illustrious in the list of distinguished worthies. In the midst of the captivity the prophecies which were at first a source of displeasure and of terror came to be a ground of hope, and were regarded with special warmth of interest. In some recensions of the Old Testament the book of Jeremiah was placed even before that of Isaiah. There seems to have been an expectation among the Jews that Jeremiah would come back to earth and complete his work; and hence, when Christ came, some said that he was Jeremias. The Jews had a tradition that he had concealed the treasures of the temple in a cave, and that they will be brought forth in the day of restoration. May it not be true that this will be fulfilled to them in a sense higher and more blessed than they have ever conceived?

II. THE BOOK.

1. Its Subject Matter.

The great body of the book refers to the land and people of Judea; but, in addition to this, there are also prophecies in reference to foreign nations. These are described as prophecies “*against* the Gentiles.” In this we doubtless have the reason why others than the Jewish nation are referred to at all, namely, because of their relations to the theocracy. The countries thus introduced are Egypt, Babylon, Elam, Philistia, Moab, Ammon, Edom, Damascus, and Kedar and Hazor. The last two names are used somewhat indefinitely; the first for the nomadic peoples of Arabia, and the second for those dwelling in towns and villages. Babylon and Egypt are not only made the subjects of special sections, but they are frequently introduced in other parts of the book because of their intimate connexion with the fortunes of the Jewish people. The portion devoted to the land and people of Judea is not, for the most part, made up of predictions, but of moral and spiritual instructions, such as might serve to keep clearly before them the fact and the character of the divine administration. Through it all, however, there is a sad refrain of impending calamity and judgment, which the prophet is very careful to connect with the religious apostasy and moral corruption of the people.

Looking at this book of prophecies in the general, we recognise:

- 1) *Much historical material.* Not only does this come to us in the headings of particular prophecies, and in the way of incidental allusion, but there are some formal statements which shed much light on the life of Jerusalem at this time. No other book of the Old Testament, which is not in its warp and woof historical, contains so much and so valuable historical matter as Jeremiah.
- 2) *The admonitory element.* The great struggle of the prophet seems to be to awaken in the people a sense of God and spiritual things, and to bring them to realize how widely they had departed from the purity and simplicity of the olden time. And he drags forth into the light some of the fearful abominations which had come to be practised among them, that they might see to what a depth they had fallen.
- 3) *The minatory element.* Some of the most vivid and terrific descriptions of coming evil which the Old Testament contains are in this book.
- 4) *Prophecies of promise and encouragement.* These are fewer in proportion than in the other prophetic books, but they are none the less beautiful and comprehensive. The one great truth that casts its glory over the whole picture is, the truth of God’s faithful covenant with his people.

On the dark background of the people's sin he places the glory of the Messianic salvation. And so, "in that stormy sunset of prophecy he beholds, in spirit, the dawn of a brighter and eternal day!"

2. Its Origin.

On this point the statement of Nägelsbach is so just and so satisfactory that we transcribe it.

"Concerning its origin, the book itself gives us some, but not complete, information. According to chap. xxxvi, 2, Jeremiah, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, dictated to Baruch the discourses which had then been delivered. In the fifth year of Jehoiakim the writing was finished, and publicly read. Jehoiakim burned it, upon which the prophet was commanded to re-write it, and this time it was severer than before. The writing consisted of prophecies which had been spoken in threatening and denunciation against Israel. Historical and consolatory passages, with prophecies against foreign nations, were excluded. This is clear both from the object of the writing and the fate to which Jehoiakim consigned it. (Chap. xxxvi, 23.) When the second transcription was finished we are not informed, but it is evident, from chap. i, 3: 'It came (the word of the Lord to Jeremiah) unto the end of the eleventh year of Zedekiah, . . . unto the carrying away of Jerusalem captive in the fifth month,' that it was after the destruction of the city and the deportation of the people: for the superscription (chap. i, 1-3) is suitable only for a writing which contains nothing of later date than the period mentioned. But the book does contain prophecies relating to the time subsequent to this epoch, which even pertain to the residence of the prophet in Egypt toward the close of his life. If, now, it is possible that Jeremiah, during the two months that he spent with Gedaliah in Mizpah, or, perhaps still better, (on account of the allusions to the journey to Egypt in chap. ii, 16, 36.) on the way to Egypt, or in Egypt itself, continued the writing begun in the fourth year of Jehoiakim to the time mentioned in chap. i, 3, and concluded it, it follows that this writing forms the main body of the book, written and edited by the prophet himself, to which the superscription (chap. i, 1-3) refers. The subsequent portions of the book, though the genuine production of Jeremiah, were added by a later editor, who did not venture to alter the original title, though it was no longer suitable."

That this later editor was Jeremiah's friend and amanuensis, Baruch, is the most natural conjecture, and one most generally accepted.

3. Its Style.

As to this, very various opinions have been expressed. Jerome describes Jeremiah as "more rustic in speech than Isaiah, and certain other prophets." Ewald concludes that his numerous repetitions and standing phrases give evidence of the decline of the poetic gift. Dean Smith concedes that he is "deficient in vigour and incisiveness, prone to lean upon others, and even to repeat himself," and that he has none of that strength and warmth of imagination which characterize Isaiah and Micah. Knobel is even more severe, and speaks of him as introducing "symbolical usages of an inferior order, and symbolical actions unskilfully contrived." More just, in some particulars, but at the same time even more unjust, is the description of the poet Campbell: "His genius seems to bend and his voice to falter under the burden of prophecy; and, though sometimes pleasingly affecting, he generally prolongs the accents of grief to monotony, and seldom avoids tautology, or reaches compression, except when he abridges the productions of other prophets."

On the other hand, Nägelsbach "fully subscribes" to the judgment of Umbreit, who says: "The most spiritual, and therefore the greatest, poet of the desert and of suffering, is certainly Jeremiah. But we have maintained yet more than this, having boldly asserted that, of all the prophets, his genius is the most poetical." And again: "If we compare Jeremiah's land with the fruitful Carmel and cedar-forest of Isaiah, it is a waste, but a poetic waste, and a true image of the melancholy state of things which lay before his eyes." "He is certainly the greatest poet of desolation and sorrow, because he most deeply feels them." Hengstenberg speaks of Jeremiah's style as exhibiting "a rich fulness of new images, with great tenderness in the delineation, a versatility which insinuates itself into every one of the most various objects, a pictorial distinctness, and, with all this, an unpretending simplicity, which keeps at a distance from the far more highly esteemed artificial style of his contemporary, Habakkuk." In one most vital matter Dean Smith accords to this book unequalled praise. "Perhaps no book of Holy Scripture sets so plainly before men the great issues of right and wrong."

Considered as to his intellect, there is much in Jeremiah which bears a striking resemblance to the apostle John. His speech is simple, clear, incisive, and vigorous. He exhibits great delicacy both of thought and feeling. His imagery is abundant, but never elaborate. His style is characterized by repetitions and favourite phrases and expressions. In single passages the poetic fire burns as brightly as anywhere in the Old Testament. If there be less of elaborateness and

ornateness of style than in Isaiah, it is more perfectly consistent with the subject matter. "He that is sad and downcast in heart, whose eyes run over with tears, is not the man to deck and trick himself out in frippery and fine speeches." Dr. Pusey's description of the style of Hosea is not inapposite when applied to Jeremiah: "The words of upbraiding, of judgment, of woe, burst out one by one, slowly, heavily, condensed, abrupt, from the prophet's heavy and shrinking soul, . . . as though each sentence burst with a groan from his heart, and he had anew to take breath before he uttered each repeated woe. Each verse forms a whole for itself, like one heavy toll in a funeral knell."

4. Its Plan.

There is in this book unusual distinctness in plan, and at the same time unusual difficulty and apparent confusion as to details. Many of the prophecies are carefully dated, and in the case of some a double date is given; as, for example, chap. xxxii, 1: "In the tenth year of Zedekiah king of Judah, which was the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar." Most of the difficulty in the matter comes from the blending of the logical with the chronological plan of arrangement. The time element does indeed enter prominently into the structure of the book, producing distinct marks of stratification; but still more controlling is the practice of grouping together cognate subjects. It is important, also, to recognise the fact that the book in its present form consists of two general classes of material: the original book, written by Baruch in the fourth and fifth years of Jehoiakim, (see chap. xxxvi,) and additions which were interspersed possibly by the same hand at a later time. Finally, there is the evident fact that at least the last chapter is an editorial addition; for the previous chapter closes with the statement, "Thus far are the words of Jeremiah."

TABLE III.

Egyptian Chronology.

	B.C.
Ahmes	1520
Amenoph I.	1498
Thotmes I.	1478
Thotmes II. (Made an Eastern campaign to the Euphrates)	1470
Thotmes III. (Conquered Babylon)	1463
Amenoph II. (Captured Nineveh)	1416
Thotmes IV.	1410
Amenoph III. (His kingdom extended from Mesopotamia to Ethiopia)	1403
Amenoph IV. (First of the "Sun worshippers.")	.....
Stranger kings, "Sun worshippers," their records effaced from the monuments	.....
Horus. (Overthrew the dynasty of "Sun worshippers")	1367
Rameses I.	1324
Sethi, or Sethos. (His the most beautiful tomb at Karnak)	1322
Rameses II. (Sesostris.) (Most illustrious of Egypt's kings)	1307
Menephtah. (By some regarded as the Pharaoh of the Exodus)	1247
Rameses III. (Subdued Philistines, Cretans, etc.)	1200
Pharaoh of uncertain name, father of Solomon's wife	1010
Sheshonk. (Shishak of Old Testament)	990
Jeroboam fled to him, (1 Kings ii, 40,) 973: invaded Palestine, (2 Chron. xii,) 969.	.....
Osorkon I. (By some thought to be the Zerah of 2 Chron. xiv, 9)	963
* * * * *	
Bocchoris the Wise	734
Shebek I. (By some identified with the So of 2 Kings xvii, 4)	728
Shebek II. (Shebatake)	716
Tehrak. (Tirhakah, the ally of Hezekiah, 2 Kings xix, 9)	690
Psammetichus I. (Invaded Palestine, captured Ashdod after a siege of 29 years)	664
Pharaoh-Necho	610
Defeated and slew Josiah at Megiddo, 609: deposed Jehoahaz and set up Jehoiakim, 609: defeated at Carchemish by Nebuchadnezzar, 607.	.....
Psammetichus II.	595
Pharaoh-Hophra	589
Captured Gaza and Sidon, and defeated the King of Tyre; succoured Zedekiah.	.....

Assyrian Chronology.

EMPIRE FOUNDED ABOUT B.C. 1500.

LIST OF SOVEREIGNS.

Asshur-bel-Nishishu, Bushur-Asshur, Asshurubalat, 15th century B.C.
 Belnirari, Budiel, Binlikhish I., Shalmaneser I., Tuklat-Samdan, 14th century B.C.
 Belku Surussur, Adarpolashur, Asshur-dayan, Mutakkil-Nabu, Asshur-Nishshu, Tiglath-Pileser I., 13th and 12th centuries B.C.
 Asshur-bel-kala, Shamshi-Bin II., Asshur-abamar, 12th century B.C.

	B.C.		B.C.
Beletaris	1070	Asshur-Nazirpal	930-905
Shalmaneser II.	.....	Shalmaneser IV	905-970
Irib-Bin	.....	Shamash-Bin	870-857
Shalmaneser III.	.....	Binnirari	857-828
Asshur-Edililam	.....	Shalmaneser V	828-818
Ramlikhish	956-936	Asshur-edililani II.	818-800
Tuklat-Samdan II.	935-930	Asshurlikhish (Sardanapalus)	800-789
NINEVEH DESTROYED	.....		789
ASSYRIAN EMPIRE RE-ESTABLISHED	.....		747
	B.C.		B.C.
Tiglath-Pileser II.	744-727	Fsarhaddon	679-667
Shalmaneser IV.	727-722	Asshur-banipal	667-647
Sargon	721-704	Asshur-edililani	647-625
Sennacherib	704-680	Saracus	625-606
NINEVEH FINALLY DESTROYED	.....		606

Babylonian Monarchy.

	B.C.		B.C.
Nabopolassar (conqueror of Nineveh)	625-604	Nergal-Sharezer	559-555
Nebuchadnezzar	604-561	Labusardochus (king only nine months)	555
Evil-Merodach	561-559	Nabonahid	555-538

TABLE V.

Passages in Jeremiah Substantially Repeated.

1. Whole passages of one or more verses: viii, 10, 12, repeats vi, 13-15: ix, 8, repeats v, 9, 29: xi, 12, 13, repeats ii, 28: xx, 12, repeats xi, 20: xxii, 4, repeats xvii, 25: xxiii, 7, repeats xvi, 14: xxvi, 6, repeats vii, 14: xxx, 23, 24, repeats xxiii, 19, 20: xxxiii, 25, 26, repeats xxxi, 35, 36: xliii, 11, repeats xv, 2: xlvi, 28, repeats xxx, 11.

2. Images, thoughts, and expressions: xv, 20, compared with i, 18, 19: xxiii, 15, compared with viii, 14, and ix, 14: xxv, 10, compared with xvi, 9, and vii, 34: xxxii, 33, compared with vii, 24, and ii, 27: xiv, 4, compared with xxxv, 15, 29, 19, and xxvi, 5, and xxv, 4, and vii, 25: xlv, 13, 18, compared with xlii, 16, 17, and xxxviii, 2, and xxxiv, 17, and xxxii, 33, and xxix, 17, and xxvii, 13, and xxi, 7, 9, and xviii, 21, and xv, 2, and xiv, 12: xlv, 22, compared with xxvi, 3, and xxv, 5, and xxiii, 2, 23, and xxi, 12, and iv, 4: xlix, 24, compared with xxx, 6, and xxii, 23, and xiii, 21, and vi, 24.

From KEIL's Introduction to the Old Testament.

CONTENTS.

- CHAP. I. — The Superscription; Jeremiah's Investiture with the Prophetic Office.
- CHAP. II. — Introductory; Jehovah's Faithfulness and Israel's Apostasy; Israel's Punishment; Grossness of Israel's Idolatry; Israel's Guilt and Punishment.
- CHAP. III. — Israel's Sin and Punishment; Judah Persists in Following Israel; the Call to Return; the Conditions of Restoration.
- CHAP. IV. — The Call to Return; Lament for the Coming Desolation and Ruin.
- CHAP. V. — Universal Corruption makes Pardon Impossible; God's Word by his Prophets will be Fulfilled in Punishment; Judah's Obduracy will call down upon her Ruin.
- CHAP. VI. — Coming of the Invading Army; the Siege; Jerusalem's and Israel's Overthrow; Justification of their Overthrow in their Stubborn Resistance; Greatness of the Calamity.
- CHAP. VII. — Vanity of Trusting in the Temple; Jewish Worship of Jehovah Hypocritical, being joined with Idolatry; Jehovah's Rejection of the Nation.
- CHAP. VIII. — Retribution; Impenitence and Punishment; the Horrors of the Visitation; Captivity and Sorrow.
- CHAP. IX. — Prevailing Deceit and Wickedness; the Desolation of the Land and the Dispersion of the People; the Carnival of Death; the Only Safety.
- CHAP. X. — The Nothingness of the False Gods; the Incomparable Jehovah; Manifestations of Jehovah's Almightiness; Misery of the People.
- CHAP. XI. — The Covenant between Jehovah and Israel; the Breaking of the Covenant by Judah; Calamity Consequent on Breaking the Covenant; Conspiracy of the Men of Anathoth.
- CHAP. XII. — Complaint at the Prosperity of the Wicked; Israel's Conspiracy Punished; Pardon and Restoration.
- CHAP. XIII. — Probably an Anticipatory Chapter, the events being, perhaps, attributable to the days of Jehoiachin.
- CHAP. XIV. — The Drought; the Prophet's Prayer; the Prophet's Prayer Refused.
- CHAP. XV. — Jeremiah's Prayer Refused; the Prophet is Corrected and Comforted.
- CHAP. XVI. — The Prophet's Duty in View of the Coming Judgment; the Cause of the Coming Judgment; Some Details of the Exile.
- CHAP. XVII. — Judah's Sin Ineffaceably Recorded; the Sources of Ruin; Prayer for Protection and Safety; Exhortation to Hallow the Sabbath.
- CHAP. XVIII. — The Figure of the Potter; Interpretation of the Parable; Application of the Parable; the Reception of the Discourse.
- CHAP. XIX. — The Broken Pitcher and its Lesson; Jeremiah's Message in the Temple.
- CHAP. XX. — The Opposition and the Punishment of Pashur; Jeremiah's Complaint.
- CHAP. XXI. — The King's Question; the Prophet's Answer.
- CHAP. XXII. — An Exhortation to Righteousness; Three Kings—Shallum, Jehoiakim, and Coniah.
- CHAP. XXIII. — The Gathering Again of the Flock; the False Prophets.
- CHAP. XXIV. — The Symbol—Two Fig-Baskets; the Interpretation of the Symbol.
- CHAP. XXV. — Introductory; the Judgment on Judah; Judgment on Babylon and other Nations; the Judgment on the World.
- CHAP. XXVI. — Destruction Threatened; Indignation of the People; the Fate of Urijah the Prophet.
- CHAP. XXVII. — The Subjugation of Neighbouring Kings; Prediction of the Subjugation of King Zedekiah; Message to the Priests and People.
- CHAP. XXVIII. — Hananiah's False Prophecy; Jeremiah's Mild and Peaceable Answer.
- CHAP. XXIX. — Letter to the Exiles; Consequences of the Letter.

- CHAP. XXX.—Introductory; the Theme; Judgment on the Nations; Israel's Deliverance; Israel's Dire Necessity and Jehovah's Mercy; the Blessedness of Restoration.
- CHAP. XXXI.—Restoration for all the Families of Israel.
- CHAP. XXXII.—Introductory; Jeremiah Buys the Field in Anathoth; Jeremiah's Prayer for Fuller Revelation; Jehovah's Gracious Answer.
- CHAP. XXXIII.—The Happiness of the Returning Exiles; Christ the Branch—the Fulfilment of both the Kingly and the Priestly Ideas; God's Perpetual Covenant.
- CHAP. XXXIV.—The Message to Zedekiah Announcing the Futility of Resistance; Judgments Denounced against the People for Annulling the Manumission of their Slaves.
- CHAP. XXXV.—The History of the Rechabites a Counterpart of that of Israel; the Application of the Rechabites' Example.
- CHAP. XXXVI.—The Command, First Writing, and Public Reading; Particulars of the Reading; the Reading to the King; Punishment Denounced against Jehoiakim.
- CHAP. XXXVII.—Jeremiah's Personal Experiences with the King; Jeremiah's Imprisonment; Jeremiah's Interview with the King.
- CHAP. XXXVIII.—The Complaint of the Princes; Jeremiah's Closer Confinement and Release; Jeremiah's Subsequent Conference with the King.
- CHAP. XXXIX.—Capture of Jerusalem; Faith of Zedekiah and Jeremiah; Consolatory Message to Ebed-melech.
- CHAP. XL.—The Release of Jeremiah; the Gathering of the People to Gedaliah; the Conspiracy against Gedaliah Reported.
- CHAP. XLI.—The Murder of Gedaliah; Johanan's Expedition to Avenge Gedaliah's Death.
- CHAP. XLII.—The Remnant Desire Jeremiah to Inquire of God; Jeremiah's Answer, (a) Safety in Judea; (b) Destruction in Egypt; Jeremiah Reproves their Hypocrisy.
- CHAP. XLIII.—The Journey to Egypt; Prediction Regarding Egypt.
- CHAP. XLIV.—Judah's Present Desolation the Result of Idolatry; Persistence in Idolatry will Bring only Ruin; Reply of the Judahites, that they were Prosperous even when Idolatrous; Jeremiah Maintains that Idolatry was the Real Cause of the People's Misery; Jeremiah Predicts Further Distress.
- CHAP. XLV.—The Time and Occasion; the Message.
- CHAP. XLVI.—The Caption, General and Particular; Song of Triumph for the Defeat of Egypt; Prophecy against Egypt; Message to Israel.
- CHAP. XLVII.—The Title; the Prophecy of Ruin.
- CHAP. XLVIII.—Calamities in Moab; Devastation of Moab; Particulars of Moab's Ruin; the Contrast.
- CHAP. XLIX.—Prophecy against Ammon; Prophecy against Edom.
- CHAP. L.—The Title; the Fall of Babylon and Deliverance of Israel; Babylon's Humiliation and Israel's Glory; Punishment for Sin; Pride and Humiliation; the Agents of this Destruction.
- CHAP. LI.—The Hostile Nation; Babylon Destroyed for Israel; God against the Idols of Babylon; the Nations Summoned against Babylon; Picture of Babylon's Ruin; Final Summing Up.
- CHAP. LII.—Fulfilment of the Predictions against Jerusalem in its Destruction by Nebuchadnezzar's Army.

THE BOOK

OF THE

PROPHET JEREMIAH.

CHAPTER I.

THE words of Jeremiah the son of Hilkiah, of the priests that were in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin :

a Josh. 21. 18; 1 Chron. 6. 60; chap. 32. 7, 8, 9.

CHAPTER I.

THE SUPERScription, 1-3.

The first three verses constitute the general heading of the book. The time described does not cover the whole period of Jeremiah's life, but rather that of his principal influence on the fortunes of the theocracy. Jehoahaz and Jehoiachin are omitted from the list of kings because of their insignificance.

1. Words—Speeches or discourses. — Most of the prophetic books commence with the title "The word of God;" but those of Jeremiah and Amos are called the "words" of these prophets. For this two reasons have been given: 1) These books contain, along with prophecy, much historical matter; 2) The whole books are historical; even the prophecies being a written record of what was at first delivered in the form of oral discourses. Such matter is in Hebrew often called "words." See marginal note 1 Kings xi, 41; 1 Chron. xxix, 29. **Son of Hilkiah**—See Introduction. **Anathoth**—A city lying one and one fourth hours northeast from Jerusalem, according to Robinson; or three miles, according to Eusebius. This place is first mentioned in Joshua xxi, 18. "Men of Anathoth" were among those who returned from the captivity. Ezra ii, 23; Neh. vii, 27. It was a priests' city and had "suburbs." Joshua xxi, 18; 1 Chron. vi, 60. See also verse 45. It would hence appear that the place was not without consequence; and combining, as it did, what is best in

2 To whom the word of the Lord came in the days of Josiah the son of Amon king of Judah, **3** in the thirteenth year of his reign. **3** It came also in the days

b Chapter 25. 3.

the life of the city and the country, it doubtless contained the ripest fruits of Jewish culture. The conditions there were favourable for producing the great representative man of this period.

2, 3. To whom the word of the Lord came—To whom the spirit of prophecy was imparted. **In the days of Josiah**—The sixteenth king of Judah after the separation from it of the kingdom of Israel. **Thirteenth year of his reign**—From "the thirteenth year" of Josiah to the eleventh year of Zedekiah was about forty years; namely, eighteen remaining of Josiah's reign, eleven of Jehoiakim's and eleven of Zedekiah's. The closing years of Jeremiah's life, spent amid the ruins of his own land and in Egypt, are not here included.

Josiah, the great reformer, stands out in his line of kings "faithful among the faithless." Five years after the commencement of Jeremiah's official career he led the people in a formal renewal of their covenant with Jehovah, and celebrated the occasion by a pass-over feast perhaps more remarkable and imposing than any other ever celebrated at Jerusalem. Eight years later, when Pharaoh-Necho was on his way to the memorable battle of Carchemish, Josiah went out against him, and being mortally wounded at Megiddo, (2 Kings xxiii, 29, 30; 2 Chron. xxxv, 22-24,) died before reaching Jerusalem. For him Jeremiah made public lamentation, "and all the singing men and the singing women spake of Josiah in their lamentations to this day." 2 Chron.

of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, ^c unto the end of the eleventh year of Zedekiah the son of Josiah king of Judah, ^d unto the carrying away of

Jerusalem captive ^e in the fifth month. **4** Then the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, **5** Before I ^f formed thee in the belly ^g I knew thee; and be-

^c Chap. 39. 2.—^d Chap. 52. 12, 15.—^e 2 Kings

25. 8.—^f Isaiah 49. 1, 5.—^g Exodus 33. 12, 17.

xxxv. 24, 25. Jehoiakim was made king by Pharaoh-Necho, who had deposed his younger brother after a three months' reign, and carried him in fetters to Riblah. As the Egyptian king was at this time making his expedition against Babylon, he charged his vassal Jehoiakim with the work of collecting a tribute of about \$200,000, which he levied on the Jewish people. But Pharaoh met his Waterloo at Carchemish, and the king of Babylon seized upon Palestine as the natural fruit of his victory. He besieged and captured Jerusalem, made the king prisoner, and carried away to Babylon many of the principal inhabitants and some of the sacred vessels of the temple. Among these prisoners were Daniel and his three friends. Jehoiakim, having been subsequently reinstated, remained tributary to the king of Babylon for three years, and then, against the advice and warnings of Jeremiah, rebelled. The Babylonish king being at that time occupied with an Asiatic expedition, sent against the Jews an army composed from several of his allied and tributary peoples, Syrians, Moabites, and Ammonites, who cruelly harassed the country. The misery of the land was extreme. Jehoiakim finally came to a violent and ignominious death, and the greatest dishonour was done to his body, for it was dragged away "beyond the gates of Jerusalem," and buried "with the burial of an ass." The times of Jehoiakim were characterized by gross and general corruption. The sacred places became altars of lust. The holy city and even the very temple were filled with abomination. See Ezek. viii. The character of this most corrupt and foolish of all the kings of Judah is concentrated into two inspired phrases, "his abomination which he did," (2 Chron. xxxvi. 8,) and "he filled Jerusalem with innocent blood." 2 Kings xxiv. 4. As in the time of Josiah the zeal and faith of the prophet

were stimulated and developed, so in that of Jehoiakim he must have been burdened and alarmed by the general and outbreking wickedness of the people. Jehoiachin, who succeeded his father Jehoiakim, having, after a brief reign of three months, been carried away to Babylon with ten thousand other captives Zedekiah, his uncle, was made king, 599 B. C. He was a fitting successor of Jehoiakim, showing the same characteristics of weakness and wickedness. "He humbled not himself before Jeremiah the prophet... from the mouth of the Lord." 2 Chron. xxxvi. 12. The cup of Judah's wickedness was now full, and God's judgments came swiftly and terribly. Jerusalem was taken and pillaged; the temple burned; the sacred vessels, what remained of them, were taken away; the glory of Jerusalem, as a political capital, finally extinguished, and the captivity fully inaugurated.

JEREMIAH'S INVESTITURE WITH THE PROPHETIC OFFICE, 4-19.

4. The word of the Lord came—

It was an objective revelation, as is plainly intimated in most cases of prophetic inspiration. It was not, probably, by a voice that addressed the prophet's physical senses; rather was it spiritually communicated, but was perfectly recognised as from God. It was not the elevation of the prophet's own religious consciousness by motions from within, but a bringing into this consciousness of something from without.

5. Before I formed thee—Jeremiah was assigned to an extraordinary work. The emphasis and solemnity of this assignment are here indicated by the fulness of the statement. As in the case of Samson, Samuel, John the Baptist, and some others, God's purpose concerning him antedated his birth. Of course there is in this nothing to imply that this is not true of

fore thou camest forth out of the womb I ^asanctified thee, and I ^aordained thee a prophet unto the nations. **6** Then said I, ^aAh, Lord God! behold, I cannot speak: for I *am* a child.

7 But the LORD said unto me, Say not, I *am* a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and ^awhatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak. **8** ^aBe not afraid of their faces: for ^mI

^a Luke 1. 15, 41; Gal. 1. 15, 16. — ¹ Heb. *gave*.
— ⁱ Exod. 4. 10; 6. 12, 30; Isa. 6. 5. — ^k Num.
22. 20, 38; Matt. 23. 20. — ⁱ Ezek. 2. 6; 3. 9;
verse 17.

others, or indeed of all; but Jeremiah is reminded and assured of this, that he may feel himself "girded of God." There is in the work which God has for men to do an individuality exactly answering to that of the worker. The eminent and notable cases of individual election mentioned in the Bible are but specimens of all. There is in this nothing of fatalism, since the free agent may, and often does, refuse to fill his assigned mission.

6. I am a child.—Moses said, (Exod. iv, 10, margin,) "I am not a man of words;" but Jeremiah, overwhelmed with the greatness of his work, cries out, "I am a child!" The original word, *na'ar*, (נַעַר,) has more scope of

meaning than our word "child," being in one instance, in plain historical prose, applied to Isaac when he was twenty-eight years old; and yet there is reason to think that Jeremiah was called to the prophetic office at an unusually early age. But these words especially reflect his sense of the greatness of the work before a prophet of God at that time; and so, by implication, the unspirituality and corruption of the time. He was young in the presence of hoary abuses. He was weak to cope with giant evils.

7, 8. I shall send thee... I am with thee.—God sometimes seeks our weakness as well as our strength. Seeming disqualifications may even constitute special fitness: for all real sufficiency is of God. Young or old, wise or foolish, cultured or without culture, it is always enough that God says, "I send thee; I am with thee."

9. And touched my mouth.—A

am with thee to deliver thee, saith the LORD. **9** Then the LORD put forth his hand, and ^atouched my mouth. And the LORD said unto me, Behold, I have ^aput my words in thy mouth. **10** ^aSee, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to ^aroot out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant.

^m Exod. 3. 13; Deut. 31. 6, 8; Josh. 1. 5; chap.
15, 20; Acts 26 17; Heb. 13. 6. — ⁿ Isa. 6. 7.
^o Isa. 51. 16; chap. 5. 14. — ^p 1 Kings 19. 17.
^q Chap. 18. 7; 2 Cor. 10. 4, 5.

sign and symbol of inspiration, implying that God would reveal his power through Jeremiah's utterances. But this symbolical act belongs not to the realm of sense, but to that of spirit. Other cases of touching the lips are those of Isaiah vi, 6, symbolical of purification; and of Daniel x, 16, symbolical of supernatural strengthening.

10. To root out, and to pull down, etc.—A fearful commission! More unwelcome than that of Jonah! Yet his work was not executive but *declarative*. He was said to *do* what he has the commission to *declare* that God will *do*. So Christ gave to Peter the declaratory power of *binding* and *loosing*, (Matt xvi, 19,) that is, the gospel commission of declaring the terms of salvation. And so Jeremiah is to **pull down, and to destroy**, because he is to be a prophet of evil to his own countrymen. True, this work of demolition was not to be unto ultimate destruction, but for reconstruction; and yet it was to extend to much that was enshrined in the national pride and dear to the national heart. The prophet's work was to be in some sense the very counterpart of that of Moses. He led the people into political independence; in Jeremiah's time this independent national life was to terminate. From being a nation they were henceforth to be only a people. The institutions which for many centuries had been the matrix of spiritual ideas in process of unfolding, were now to be cast down and overthrown in order that these same truths might have freedom for further development. And so his mission was also to **build, and to plant**. The political life of the

11 Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Jeremiah, what seest thou? And I said, I see a rod of an almond tree. **12** Then said the LORD unto me, Thou hast well seen: for I will hasten my word to perform it. **13** And the word of the LORD came unto me the second time, saying, What seest thou? And I said, I see ^r a seething pot; and the face thereof ^{is} ^s toward the north. **14** Then the

^r Ezek. 11. 3, 7; 24. 3.—² Heb. *from the face of the north*.—^s Chap. 4. 6; 6. 1.

nation was to terminate for the sake of its religious life. The work of demolition and extirpation was preparatory to planting and building. It was one stage of that violence by which a way was opened for the bringing in of a better hope.

It is worthy of note, that while we have here four terms to set forth the negative aspect of the prophet's work, there are but two to represent its positive aspect. This indicates the moral condition of the times, and foreshadows the character of the book. Israel was to be humbled and afflicted that the theocracy might be strengthened and elevated. Israel was to go into captivity that the truth of God might be free.

11. What seest thou—A form of question many times used to call attention to a prophetic vision. See especially the book of Zechariah. **A rod of an almond tree**—The word

שֶׁקֶד, "almond," means primarily *wakeful, vigilant*, and is applied to this tree because it wakes up to life, and blossoms in January, while the other trees are still in their winter's sleep. Hence it is a natural symbol of vigilance, and so God uses it to suggest his own ever-wakeful activity. The word

מַקֵּל, (*makkel*), though ordinarily meaning "rod," is here used in the sense of *shoot or twig*. Both Gesenius and Fürst give to the root form the meaning to *germinate*. Other examples of the sense which seems to be demanded in this text are, Gen. xxx, 37; Jer. xlviii, 17.

12. I will hasten—Better, *I will be watchful over*. **My word to perform it**—In winter the reign of death over

LORD said unto me, Out of the ^a north an evil ^b shall break forth upon all the inhabitants of the land. **15** For, lo, I will ^c call all the families of the kingdoms of the north, saith the LORD; and they shall come, and they shall ^d set every one his throne at the entering of the gates of Jerusalem, and against all the walls thereof round about, and against all the cities of Judah. **16** And I will utter my judgments against them touch-

³ Heb. *shall be opened*.—^t Chap. 5. 15; 6. 22; 10. 22; 25. 9.—^u Chap. 39. 3; 43. 10.

the vegetable kingdom is well nigh universal. The almond wakes to life as a visible token and proof of the mindfulness of God and the sure return of life's resistless dominion. So now God gives to Jeremiah this token of an activity which will assert his power, and call the nation out of its sinful sleep. But that this watchfulness of God was not for purposes of judgment only is clearly stated in the parallel passage in chapter xxxi, 28.

13. A seething pot—Rather, a *caldron*. The attributive is participial in form, meaning literally "blown upon," and hence is here well rendered by "seething." **The face . . . is toward the north**—Better, *from "the north,"* and so is seen as if pouring its burning contents over the land.

14. Shall break forth—Literally, *shall be opened*. **All the inhabitants of the land**—Of Judea. The language suggests the universality of the evil.

15. I will call—Literally, *I am calling*. The present tense shows that the judgment is at the very door, yea, has even now begun. The summons has already gone forth. **The kingdoms of the north**—Not only those of Syria, which is the country lying immediately to the north of Palestine, but of the whole region of the Euphrates and the Tigris; for all armies coming from this region would enter Palestine from the north. **Shall set . . . his throne**—Meaning, establish a hostile power, and so implies violence against Jerusalem and the cities of Judah. "The chiefs of these various races come as God's ministers to hold solemn court, and to give sentence in his name."

ing all their wickedness, * who have forsaken me, and have burned incense unto other gods, and worshipped the works of their own hands.

17 Thou therefore * gird up thy loins, and arise, and speak unto them all that I command thee: * be not dismayed at their faces, lest I * confound thee before them. 18 For, behold, I have made thee this day * a defenced city, and an iron pillar, and brazen walls against the whole land, against the kings of Judah, against the princes thereof, against the priests thereof, and against the people of

* Deut. 28. 20; chap. 17. 13.—† 1 Kings 18. 46; 2 Kings 4. 29; 9. 1; Job 38. 3; Luke 12. 35; 1 Pet. 1. 13.—a Exod. 3. 12; verse 8; Ezek. 2. 6.—4 Or, break to pieces.

17, 18. **Gird up thy loins**—Fasten up the outer garment with the girdle, so as to be ready for vigorous exertion. Thus was Jeremiah to address himself to his great and urgent work. In God's promise to him, as given in the concluding portion of this verse, we have a paronomasia which is imperfectly shown in our Version. It is literally, *Be not dismayed*, (Niphal,) *lest I dismay thee*, (Hiphil.) If thou, Jeremiah, shalt give way to cowardice or fear, I, Jehovah, will throw thee into terror and dismay; but if thou shalt stand firm in the strength of God, I will make thee **a defenced city**, strong to resist all assaults; an **iron pillar**, which the storm cannot shatter; and **brazen walls**, which no missiles can batter down or penetrate. Thou shalt stand **against the whole land**—its **kings**, its **princes**, its **priests**, and its **people**. All these, with infernal unanimity, shall conspire against thee, but **shall not prevail**.

CHAPTER II.

INTRODUCTORY, 1-3.

1. **Moreover**—In the original simply *and*, thus showing the close connexion between this first of the prophetic discourses and the preceding account of the prophet's call.

2. **In the ears of Jerusalem**—The very headquarters of the theocracy. But it by no means follows, as has been too hastily assumed, that the prophet at that time left Anathoth to reside at Jerusalem, or that the latter was exclusively the sphere of his la-

the land. 19 And they shall fight against thee; but they shall not prevail against thee; * for I *am* with thee, saith the LORD, to deliver thee.

CHAPTER II.

MOREOVER the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 2 Go and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith the LORD; I remember * thee, the kindness of thy * youth, the love of thine espousals, * when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land *that was* not sown. 3 * Israel *was* holiness unto

y Isa. 50. 7; chap. 6. 27; 15. 20.—z Verse 8.—1 Or, *for thy sake*.—a Ezek. 16. 8, 22, 60; 23. 3, 8, 19; Hosea 2. 15.—b Deut. 2. 7.—c Exod. 19. 5, 6.

bours. The contrary seems to be implied in xi, 21-23. **Remember thee**—The very words contain an implication of a lost joy—that the old love of the people had given place to alienation and infidelity. "Thee"—better, as the margin, *for thy sake*; literally, *for thee*, on thy account; an expression which is elsewhere used, sometimes in a good sense, to reward, as in Neh. v, 19, Psa. cvi, 45, etc.; and also in a bad sense, to repay with evil, as in Neh. vi, 14, Psa. lxxix, 8, etc. Here the remembrance is clearly used in the former sense. **The kindness of thy youth**, may mean the love of God for Israel, or the love of Israel for God, but the latter is evidently the sense demanded by the connexion. The same thought is carried forward into more novel and emphatic expression in **the love of thine espousals**; thy courtship-time, more fully described as the time of the sojourning in the wilderness. As the wife leaves her old associations and cleaves to her husband, so Israel forsook all and followed God into the parched and barren "wilderness." God *remembers* tenderly this expression of loyal love, even as a husband remembers the pure and trustful days of an alienated or fallen wife. In spite of her murmurings and rebellions, her apostasy and idolatry, God still recognises Israel as the nation which he admitted to special covenant with himself, and therefore can never be to him as any other people.

3. **Holiness unto the Lord**—Thier national motto, worn by the high

the LORD, and ^d the firstfruits of his increase: ^e all that devour him shall offend; evil shall come upon them, saith the LORD. 4 Hear ye the word of the LORD, O house of Jacob, and all the families of the house of Israel:

5 Thus saith the LORD, 'What iniquity have your fathers found in me, that they are gone far from me, ^f and have walked after vanity, and are be-

^d James 1. 18; Rev. 14. 4.—^e Chap. 12. 14: see chap. 50. 7.—^f Isa. 5. 4; Mic. 6. 3.—^g 2 Kings 17. 15; Jonah 2. 8.

priest on his breastplate. Israel was the sanctuary of the nations; and those who should lay violent hands on her would bring upon themselves Jehovah's curse as certainly as they who defile the sanctuary or seize the gift from the consecrated altar. "He that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye." **Firstfruits**—God's portion of the harvest—a specimen and a pledge of the general ingathering. And so if Israel is the "firstfruits," there is in this an implication that all the nations shall ultimately be the Lord's. So are Christians the firstfruits of a redeemed universe. Rom. viii. 23.

JEHOVAH'S FAITHFULNESS AND ISRAEL'S APOSTASY, 4-13.

4. **Hear... O house of Jacob**—God's reproof for their ungrateful and wicked apostasy is directed against the whole nation. **All the families of the house of Israel**—Though the kingdoms of Judah and Israel were separated and alienated from each other, they are joined in a direful unity of apostasy and ruin.

5. **Have walked after vanity**—The original of "vanity" is, in the historical books, used in the sense of idols or false gods, as in Deut. xxxii. 21; 1 Kings xvi. 13, 26, etc.; but in Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and some of the Psalms, it is used in a more general or abstract sense. In this book it is used in its earlier import, and this is one of many indications of the affinity of this book in thought and language with the formative period of Hebrew life. The precise words of this text occur in 2 Kings xvii. 15, where they are applied to the ten tribes. They

come vain? ■ Neither said they, Where ^h is the LORD that ⁱ brought us up out of the land of Egypt, that led us through ^j the wilderness, through a land of deserts and of pits, through a land of drought, and of the shadow of death, through a land that no man passed through, and where no man dwelt? 7 And I brought you into ^k a plentiful country, to eat the fruit thereof and the

^h Isa. 63. 9, 11, 13; Hosea 13. 4.—ⁱ Deut. 8. 15; 32. 10.—^j Num. 13. 27; 14. 7, 8; Deut. 8. 7-9.—^k Or, *the land of Carmel*.

involve the universally recognised law that the worshipper will be as the worshipped. The deity enshrined in the soul will, of necessity, be the dominant force in the life and character. God will be first of all—Creator in his own realm.

6. **Neither said they**—God is not in all their thoughts—there is total forgetfulness of him. **That led us ... through a land of deserts, etc.**—This description of the desert of the Exodus is graphic and truthful, and may be taken as a fitting illustration of the verisimilitude of Scripture. It is described as a **wilderness**, that is, a region comparatively uninhabited; a **land of deserts**, a region of waste country; **... of pits, ... of drought, ... of the shadow of death**, without inhabitant and without traveller! (See Robinson, Stanley, and especially PALMER'S *Desert of the Exodus*.)

7. **I brought you into a plentiful country**—The original is Carmel, (כַּרְמֶל) *garden land*, as opposed to the "wilderness." The fruits of this "Carmel" are enumerated in Deut. viii. 7-9; "a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills; a land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig-trees, and pomegranates; a land of oil olive, and honey; a land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness; thou shalt not lack any thing in it; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass." In order rightly to appreciate this description we must bear in mind that its background is the peninsula of Sinai and the South Country, and also that the contrast was intensified and

goodness thereof; but when ye entered, ye ¹defiled my land, and made mine heritage an abomination. **8** The priests said not, Where *is* the Lord? and they that handle the ^mlaw knew me not: the pastors also transgressed against me, ^aand the prophets prophesied by Baal, and walked after *things that* ^odo not profit.

9 Wherefore ^pI will yet plead with

^l Lev. 18. 25, 27, 28; Num. 35. 33, 34; Psa. 78. 58, 59; 106. 38; chap. 3. 1; 18. 18.—^m Mal. 2. 6, 7; Rom. 2. 20.—ⁿ Chap. 23. 13.—^o Ver. 11; Hab. 2. 18.—^p Ezek. 20. 35, 36; Micah 6. 2.

heightened by the hardships and privations of the forty years' wandering in this region of silence and desolation. As the traveller of to-day emerges from the wilderness of the wandering into the land of promise he exchanges gloom, sterility, solitude, and monotony for beauty, variety, and the exhilaration of life. **Ye defiled my land**—It should have been, in all its length and breadth, a sanctuary; ye have made it an abomination. Its high hills have become altars of lust; its green trees coverts of uncleanness; and even its sacred temple is filled with pollutions.

8. This verse is doubly climacteric. Its *subjects* are—

1. Priests in general—**The priests.**

2. Teaching priests—**They that handle the law.**

3. Kings and princes—**Pastors.**

4. Inspired men—**Prophets.**

Its predicates are—

1. Indifference—**Said not, Where is the Lord?**

2. Ignorance—**Knew me not.**

3. Rebellion—**Transgressed against me.**

4. Sacrilege—**Prophesied by Baal.**

Note, also, the adjustment of predicate to subject. The prophet charges the priests, whose office was to serve in holy things and thus to quicken the religious sensibilities of the people, with being themselves insensible. He charges those who should be teachers, with ignorance. He charges those selected to wield and exercise authority, with being themselves rebels. And finally, he charges those who profess to speak under the inspiration of God with going to the extreme of becoming

you, saith the LORD, and ^awith your children's children will I plead. **10** For pass ^sover the isles of Chittim, and see; and send unto Kedar, and consider diligently, and see if there be such a thing.

11 ^rHath a nation changed *their* gods, which *are* ^ayet no gods? ^tbut my people have changed their glory for ^u*that which* doth not profit. **12** ^vBe astonished, O ye heavens, at this, and be horribly

^q Exod. 20. 5; Lev. 20. 5.—³ Or, *over to*.—^r Micah 4. 5.—^s Psa. 115. 4; Isa. 37. 19; chap. 16. 10.—^t Psa. 106. 20; Rom. 1. 25.—^u Verse 8.—^v Isa. 1. 2; chap. 6. 19.

prophets of Baal. Never was a more fearful indictment brought against the leaders of the people.

9. Plead—Better, *contend*. It is the term used of the plaintiff making accusation in court. It covers all means, corrective or punitive, which would tend to establish the right. **Children's children**—The fathers are mentioned in verse 5, the *present generation* in verses 7 and 9, and here, their *descendants*. In all, a fundamental moral unity is assumed. They are one in sin, and so will be one in punishment.

10. Isles of Chittim—The islands and coastlands of the *west*, as **Kedar** is representative of the *east*. The plain meaning is, that the sin of Israel is unparalleled. Similar is the terrible indictment of Christ in Matt. xi, 20–24.

11. Changed—הִשָּׁמֵר. It is best to regard this as from an *ayin-vav* root, and not as identical in its root with “boast yourselves,” in Isaiah lxi, 1. **Gods**—Our Authorized Version misses the full force of the original. **Hath a nation changed . . . gods, which are yet no gods**—What so extraordinary as to change gods? And yet the matter is not fairly illustrated by an appeal to experience, for the gods of the nations are not gods. The prophet opposes to **glory** not its exact antithesis, *shame*, but **that which doth not profit**, perhaps as pointing the contrast more sharply.

12. Be astonished, O ye heavens—Still further to suggest that which is essentially unspeakable, the prophet employs an apostrophe. He calls upon the “heavens” to “be astonished” at the fearfulness of this crime. Not

afraid, be ye very desolate, saith the LORD. **13** For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the "fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.

14 *Is Israel a servant? is he a home-born slave? why is he spoiled?* **15** The young lions roared upon him, and yelled, and they made his land waste:

v Psa. 36. 9; chap. 17. 13; 18. 14; John 4. 14.
—*a* See Exod. 4. 22.—*4* Heb. become a spoil?
—*y* Isa. 1. 7; chap. 4. 7.—*5* Heb. gave out their voice.

(as Keil) because here the glory of God is most reflected, nor (as Nägelsbach) because "they can behold and compare all that takes place;" but because they are most beyond the reach of earthly changes, and hence, if they express astonishment, it is the most emphatic expression possible. The terms employed show the struggle of the writer for emphasis. **Be astonished, ... be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate.**

13. My people have committed two evils—As against the one sin of the heathen. A twofold contrast is implied in the language used: 1) Between a living fountain and a cistern; 2) Between a suitable cistern and a worthless one.

ISRAEL'S PUNISHMENT, 14—19.

14. Is Israel a servant... a home-born—Some, as Nägelsbach, make the interrogator in this place to be the prophet, but it is better to regard this as a continuation of the word of God. "Servant" and "homeborn" (*slave*) are used in a bad sense, and not, as R. Payne Smith and others hold, to call attention to his membership in Jehovah's family, though in a low sense, which would involve a claim to protection and safety. The meaning is, Is Israel a servant? If not, why is he treated as though he were? **Why is he spoiled?**

15. Lions roared upon him—"Lions" stand for enemies thirsting for plunder. Micah v, 8; Isa. v, 29, etc. They "roared," not "upon," but *against* him; a symbolical statement of the calamities already experienced as well as of those yet in reserve. The

his cities are burned without inhabitant. **16** Also the children of Noph and *Tahapanes* have broken the crown of thy head. **17** Hast thou not procured this unto thyself, in that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God, when he led thee by the way? **18** And now what hast thou to do in the way of Egypt, to drink the waters of *Sihor*? or what hast thou to do in the way of Assyria, to

2 Chapter 43. 7, 8, 9.—*6* Or, feed on thy crown; Deut. 33. 20; Isaiah 8. 8.—*a* Chapter 4. 18.—*b* Deut. 32. 10.—*c* Isaiah 30. 1, 2.—*d* Josh. 13. 3.

last sentence in the verse sets forth in plain language the present condition of the kingdom of Israel. But while this is the foreground of the picture, the swiftly-coming calamities of Judah are also present in prophetic vision.

16. Noph (see Isaiah xix, 13, and Ezekiel xxx, 13, 16) is an abbreviation of Menoph, which, in the Hebrew of Hosea ix, 6, takes the other abbreviated form of Moph. This was Memphis, situated on the west bank of the Nile, south of old Cairo. It was the ancient capital of Lower Egypt, and later of the whole kingdom. **Tahapanes** was situated on the Pelusiac arm of the Nile. The two names taken together are made to represent Egypt. **Have broken the crown**—The English version misses the sense. The verb means, not to break, but to feed on. The sense is, *They shall depasture the crown of thy head*; that is, they shall make it bare, leave it without a covering, a sign of disgrace and of sorrow. Comp. xlv, 5, and xlviii, 37.

17. Hast thou not procured this—This has come from forsaking the Lord thy God, when he led thee by the way—No lions are in that way. It is not a way of servitude and sorrow. It may lead into a region of drought and death-shade, but it shall also be through it. To the eye of sense it may be devious and difficult, but to the eye of faith it leads directly to the promised land.

18. The way of Egypt, is the way they must go to secure the aid of Egypt. What business have you going down to Egypt for help? God's way is from Egypt, not to it. **Sihor** is the

drink the waters of the river? **19** Thine own ^e wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee: know therefore and see that *it is* an evil thing and bitter, that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God, and that my fear is not in thee, saith the Lord God of hosts.

20 For of old time I have broken thy yoke, and burst thy bands; and ^f thou saidst, I will not ^g transgress;

^e Isa. 3. 9; Hosea 5. 5.—^f Exod. 19. 8; Josh. 24. 18; Judg. 10. 16; 1 Sam. 12. 10.—^g Or, *serve*.
—^h Deut. 12. 2; Isa. 57. 5, 7; chap. 3. 6.
—ⁱ Exod. 34. 15, 16.—^j Exod. 15. 17; Psal. 44. 2;

Nile, so called because of its black and turbid waters. **The river**—The Euphrates, upon whose banks stood Nineveh, Assyria's capital. To "drink the waters of Sihor," or "the river," is to lay hold of the strength of Egypt or of Assyria. Neither the Nile nor the Euphrates could take the place of "the river of God," which is the one unfailing source of supply to his people. Such a substitution would be like that mentioned verse 13, "broken cisterns" for "living waters."

19. Thy backslidings shall reprove thee—This verse sums up all Judah's misdoings in one plain, comprehensive, terrible statement. All this fearful array of evils—those filling the background of the recent past and those crowding the immediate future—are self-procured. The nation had voluntarily plucked an apple of Sodom, only to find it to be "bitter and bloody dust!"

GROSSNESS OF ISRAEL'S IDOLATRY, 20-28.

20. Of old time—From immemorial antiquity. The exact thing implied is, that no limit comes into view, either because none is seen or because there is none. For rhetorical purposes this term, *eternity*, in Hebrew more than in English, is used in an accommodated sense. The text should not read, **I have broken**, though in this the English follows both the Chaldee and Syriac, but *thou hast broken thy yoke, and burst thy bands*. The term "bands" is used in the sense of commandments of God which restrain men from rushing into ruin, (see Psal. ii, 3),

when ^e upon every high hill and under every green tree thou wanderest, ^h playing the harlot. **21** Yet I had ⁱ planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right seed: how then art thou turned into ^k the degenerate plant of a strange vine unto me? **22** For though thou ^l wash thee with nitre, and take thee much soap, ^m yet ⁿ thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord God. **23** ^o How canst thou say, I am not polluted, I have not

80, 8; Isa. 5. 1, etc.; 60. 21; Matt. 21. 33; Mark 12. 1; Luke 20. 9.—^k Deut. 32. 32; Isa. 1. 21; 5. 4.—^l Job 9. 30.—^m Deut. 32. 34; Job 14. 17; Hosea 13. 12.—ⁿ Prov. 30. 12.

and so the two phrases have substantially the same import. **High hill. . green tree**—In these expressions there is a double allusion to the idolatrous shrines so numerous in the land, and also to terrible and common facts of individual vileness. The union of these in this passage is probably in perfect accord with the actual facts in the case. The connexion between the sin of idolatry and of impurity has always been most intimate.

21. In the original, two different words in the first member of this verse are emphasized, which fact of emphasis escapes our attention in the English Version. **I had planted**—The Hebrew places emphasis on the pronoun *I*, as if God would disclaim all responsibility for the monstrous product. The second emphatic word is **wholly**, which has a special force from its connexion with *sorek*, **noble vine**, preceding. God had planted Israel a "noble vine," "wholly" a **right seed**, but they had changed themselves into **the degenerate plant (bastards) of a strange vine**.

22. Nitre—A mineral alkali. **Soap**—A vegetable alkali. The original for **wash** is not the ordinary term, but the one which is used in application to the fuller. The most powerful means of purification of human devising would be ineffectual.

23, 24. I am not polluted—New and most significant imagery is employed to illustrate the insane lust of idolatry. The reckless greed of the people for the excitements of the false worship is figured by the swift dromedary **traversing her ways**, and the

gone after Baalim? See thy way ^oin the valley, know what thou hast done: ^athou art a swift dromedary traversing her ways; **24** ^pA wild ass ¹⁰used to the wilderness, *that* snuffeth up the wind at ¹¹her pleasure; in her occasion who can ¹²turn her away? all they that seek her will not weary themselves; in her month they shall find her. **25** Withhold thy foot from being unshod, and thy throat from thirst: but ^athou saidst, ¹³There is no hope: no; for I have loved ^rstrangers, and after them will I go. **26** As the thief is ashamed when he is found, so is the house of Israel ashamed; they, their kings, their princes, and their priests, and their prophets, **27** Saying to a stock, Thou art my father; and to a stone, Thou hast ¹⁴brought me forth: for they have

^o Chap. 7. 31.—8 Or, *O swift dromedary*.—^p Job 39. 5, etc.; chap. 14. 6.—9 Or, *O wild ass*, etc.—10 Heb. *taught*.—11 Heb. *the desire of her heart*.—12 Or, *reverse it*.—^q Chap. 18. 12.—13 Or, *Is the case desperate?*.—^r Deut. 32. 16; chapter 3. 13.—14 Or, *begotten me*.—15 Heb. *the hinder part of the neck*.

wild ass running herself weary in her heat. **Thy way in the valley**—Is probably an allusion to the valley of Ben-Hinnom, to the south of Jerusalem, where the rites of Moloch were celebrated, and which had become infamous as the place where human sacrifices were offered. It was fitly a type of hell and its ever-burning fire. **Swift dromedary**—Rather, *camel-jilly*. The adjective suggests the animal heat which is the main feature of the comparison. “Traversing”—that is, *crossing*, or *interweaving*; a graphic picture of urgent, unregulated haste. **Wild ass**—Emblem of unbridled licentiousness. See Job xxiv. 5; xxxix. 5. **Snuffeth up wind...occasion...her month**—All these terms point to the one feature of the comparison—the passionate heat of the animal.

25. Withhold...from being unshod—Running so eagerly after illicit love as to go with unsandalled feet and thirsty throat. **No hope**—Your warning is vain and useless: we have made our election.

27. In the time of...trouble—As with the prodigal when he “began to be in want,” or the sailors with Jonah in the storm. A little pressure of calamity will often develop a vivid sense

turned ¹⁶*their* back unto me, and not *their* face: but in the time of their ^atrouble they will say, Arise, and save us. **28** But ^rwhere are thy gods that thou hast made thee? let them arise, if they ^acan save thee in the time of thy ¹⁶trouble: for ^raccording to the number of thy cities are thy gods, O Judah. **29** ^wWherefore will ye plead with me? ye all have transgressed against me, saith the LORD. **30** In vain have I ^asmitten your children; they received no correction: your own sword hath ^rdevoured your prophets, like a destroying lion.

31 O generation, see ye the word of the LORD. ²Have I been a wilderness unto Israel? a land of darkness? wherefore say my people, ¹⁷^aWe are lords; ^bwe will come no more unto thee?

^a Judges 10. 10; Psalm 78. 34; Isaiah 26. 16.—^t Deut. 32. 37; Judges 10. 14.—^u Isaiah 45. 20.—¹⁶ Heb. *evil*.—^v Chap. 11. 13.—^w Verses 23, 25.—^x Isaiah 1. 5; 9. 13; chapter 5. 3.—^y 2 Chron. 36. 16; Neh. 9. 26; Matt. 23. 29, etc.; Acts 7. 52; 1 Thess. 2. 15.—^z Verse 5.—¹⁷ Heb. *We have dominion*.—^a Psa. 12. 4.—^b Deut. 32. 15.

of God, and most fervent appeals for mercy and help.

28. Where are thy gods—“I also will laugh at your calamity: I will mock when your fear cometh.” This passage of bitter irony is double-barbed. It contains a taunt of their many gods and of their powerlessness.

ISRAEL'S GUILT AND PUNISHMENT, 29-35.

30. Sword hath devoured—See 1 Kings xviii. 4, 13; xix. 10; 2 Kings xxi. 16, etc.

31. O generation, see ye—Rather, *O generation that ye are*. The pronoun belongs with the appellative, and not, as in the English, with the verb, and so emphasizes God's sorrow and indignation. **Have I been a wilderness...a land of darkness**—There is a mingled sternness and tenderness in this passage which the Authorized Version does not adequately convey. **We are lords**—Better, with the Chaldee, Syriac, and Vulgate, *We will wander at will*, that is, we will not be held in restraint. This verb is also used in Gen. xxvii. 40; Hosea xi. 12; and Psa. lv. 2; in each of which places the sense is missed in the Anglican Version.

32 Can a maid forget her ornaments, or a bride her attire? * yet my people have forgotten me days without number.

33 Why trimmest thou thy way to seek love? therefore hast thou also taught the wicked ones thy ways. **34** Also in thy skirts is found ^dthe blood of the souls of the poor innocents: I have not found it by ^{is} secret search, but upon all these.

35 * Yet thou sayest, Because I am innocent, surely his anger shall turn from me. Behold, ⁱI will plead with thee, * because thou sayest, I have not sinned.

36 ^b Why gaddest thou about so much to change thy way? ¹ thou also shalt be

ashamed of Egypt, * as thou wast ashamed of Assyria. **37** Yea, thou shalt go forth from him, and ¹ thine hands upon thine head: for the LORD hath rejected thy confidences, and thou shalt not prosper in them.

CHAPTER III.

THEY ¹ say, If a man put away his wife, and she go from him, and become another man's, * shall he return unto her again? shall not that ^b land be greatly polluted? but thou hast ^c played the harlot with many lovers; ^d yet return again to me, saith the LORD. **2** Lift up

^c Psa. 106. 21; chap. 13. 25; Hosea 8. 14.—^d Psa. 106. 38; chap. 19. 4.—¹ Heb. *digging*.

^e Verses 23, 29.—^f Ver. 9.—^g Prov. 23. 13; 1 John 1. 8, 10.—^h Verse 18; chap. 31. 22; Hosea 5. 13; 12. 1.

32. More tenderly does God appeal to them in the comparison of this verse. **Can a maid forget her ornaments, or a bride her attire**—This last term means a sash or girdle which a bride puts on on her wedding-day, answering somewhat in significance and preciousness to the marriage ring. So God is his people's best adornment and choicest treasure, and yet they have turned away from him.

34. Secret search—Rather, *at housebreaking*. The meaning is, Thou didst not kill the poor for crime, but this is *innocent* blood upon thy skirts. **But upon all these**—Rather, *on account of all these*, the wicked lusts of idolatry. But the passage is difficult, and this sense, which is favoured by Keil, Hitzig, R. Payne Smith, and others, is far from satisfactory.

35. Yet thou sayest, etc.—The language seems to imply some such outward phariseeism as the reformation of Josiah might have produced. It is not unlikely that this reformation may have supplied the background of this ver-e.

36. Why gaddest thou—What restlessness and inconstancy equals that of the unbeliever? From Egypt to Assyria, from Assyria to Babylon, from rationalism to spiritualism, from pantheism to atheism, from no religion to all religions—such a life is one weary go-round of fruitless toil and profitless speculation. Nothing in human history is more notable than the fickleness of infidelity.

ⁱ Isa. 30. 3; chap. 37. 7.—^k 2 Chron. 28. 16, 20, 21.—^l 2 Sam. 13. 19.—¹ Heb. *Saying*.—^a Deut. 24. 4.—^b Chap. 2. 7.—^c Chap. 2. 20; Ezekiel 16. 26, 28, 29.—^d Chapter 4. 1; Zech. 1. 3.

37. From him—Namely, Egypt. As thou didst turn to Egypt from Assyria, so shalt thou turn from him, clasping thy head with thy hands in grief and dismay. The might of Egypt will surely be overthrown, and all who make it a covert shall be dislodged.

CHAPTER III.

ISRAEL'S SIN AND PUNISHMENT, 1-5.

1. They say—Hebrew, *to say*. This harsh and unusual use of the infinitive has been to interpreters a source of perplexity. Does it mark the beginning of a new discourse, or is it a continuation of the preceding? The former, say Nögelbach and Ewald; the latter, say Hitzig, Keil, and a majority of the best expositors. And inasmuch as we have at verse six the formal marking of a new discourse, this latter view is clearly to be preferred. And so this infinitive is not to be construed as an initial form, with Jerome, R. Payne Smith, and many others; but as in direct and close dependence on the preceding chapter, thus: "The Lord hath rejected thy confidences" . . . *saying*, etc. **Shall he return unto her again**—A man who had put away his wife was forbidden to take her again if, in the interval, she had been married to another. Deut. xxiv, 1-4. **Yet return . . . to me**—Most expositors regard the verb here as an infinitive and the sentence as a question: *Will ye return to me?* but there is no conclusive reason for this. In the Authorized Ver-

thine eyes unto ^e the high places, and see where thou hast not been lain with. ^f In the ways hast thou sat for them, as the Arabian in the wilderness; ^g and thou hast polluted the land with thy whoredoms and with thy wickedness. **3** Therefore the ^h showers have been withholden, and there hath been no latter rain; and thou hadst a ⁱ whore's forehead, thou refusedst to be ashamed. **4** Wilt thou not from this time cry unto me, My father, thou ^k art ^l the guide of ^m my youth? **5** ⁿ Will he reserve *his* anger for ever? will he keep *it* to the end? Behold, thou hast spoken and done evil things as thou couldest.

^e See Deut. 12. 2; chap. 2. 20.—^f Gen. 38. 14; Prov. 23. 28; Ezek. 16. 24. 25.—^g Chap. 2. 7; verse 9.—^h Lev. 26. 19; Deut. 28. 23, 24; chap. 9. 12; 14. 4.—ⁱ Chap. 3. 3; 6. 15; 8. 12; Ezek. 3. 7; Zeph. 3. 5.—^k Prov. 2. 17.

sion we have a very satisfactory rendering of the Hebrew, and a most impressive illustration of the truth that God's ways are not as our ways. His wonderful mercy is superior to all human obstructions. Great as is man's sin, it is not so great as God's mercy. With this view of the passage agree the Syriac and Vulgate Versions and the Targum.

2. High places—More exactly, *bare-topped hills*; the places selected for idolatrous worship, which is here and elsewhere denominated spiritual adultery. Compare Hosea iv, 13; Numbers xxiii, 3. **As the Arabian**, etc.—An allusion to the freebooting propensities of the Bedouins. Eager as they were for plunder, so eager was Israel for idolatry.

3. Showers have been withholden—Perhaps, in some cases, in an extraordinary and miraculous way, as in the time of Ahab; and yet the statement should by no means be confined to so narrow an application. Drought, famine, and all other types of natural evil, are all for the one purpose of spiritual correction, rectification, and development.

4. Wilt thou not, etc.—Rather, *Hast thou not from this time called me*, etc.? **From this time**, stands in contrast with "of old time," in chap. ii, 20. **Guide of my youth**—That is, *husband*. See Hosea ii, 7, 13.

5. Thou hast spoken—Thus do

■ The LORD said also unto me in the days of Josiah the king, *Hast thou seen that which ^a backsliding Israel hath done? she is ^b gone up upon every high mountain and under every green tree, and there hath played the harlot.* **7** ^c And I said after she had done all these *things*, Turn thou unto me. But she returned not. And her treacherous ^d sister Judah saw *it*. **8** And I saw, when ^e for all the causes whereby backsliding Israel committed adultery, I had ^f put her away, and given her a bill of divorce; ^g yet her treacherous sister Judah feared not, but went and played the harlot also. **■** And it came to pass

^l Chap. 2. 2; Hosea 2. 15.—^m Psa. 77. 7, etc.; 103. 9; Isa. 57. 16; verse 12.—ⁿ Verses 11, 14; chap. 7. 24.—^o Chap. 2. 20.—^p 2 Kings 17. 13.—^q Ezek. 16. 46; 23. 2. 4.—^r Ezek. 23. 9.—^s 2 Kings 17. 6, 18.—^t Ezek. 23. 11, etc.

the people *speaking*, but they do evil. Their words are friendly, but their actions are rebellious.

JUDAH PERSISTS IN FOLLOWING ISRAEL, 6-10.

6. In the days of Josiah—This formal note of time clearly indicates the beginning of a new discourse. It is not necessarily implied that the preceding discourse was not also in the time of Josiah; this may be taken only as a careful marking of the time of the following one, which is very extended and important. **Backsliding Israel hath done**—Namely, as you are now doing. Nearly a hundred years before was Israel destroyed, and had ceased to exist as a kingdom; and now her history and fate are pointed to as a warning to Judah. You are walking in her footsteps; you shall come to her calamitous end.

7. And I said, etc.—The object of the verb "said" begins with **after**, and the verb **turn** is thought by most expositors to be in the third person. The reading then would be, **And I said** (namely, to myself = thought,) **after she had done all... Turn thou unto me. But she returned not. Treacherous**—Better, *faithless*. See Ezekiel's allegory in chapter xxiii for the character of these two sisters—apostate Israel and hypocritical Judah.

8. A bill of divorce—How fearful a thing is a bill of divorce from the

through the ² lightness of her whoredom, that she ^u defiled the land, and committed adultery with ^v stones and with stocks. **10** And yet for all this her treacherous sister Judah hath not turned unto me ^w with her whole heart, but ³ feignedly, saith the LORD. **11** And the LORD said unto me, ^x The backsliding Israel hath justified herself more than treacherous Judah.

12 Go and proclaim these words toward ^y the north, and say, Return,

² Or, *fame*.—^u Chapter 2. 7; verse 2.—^v Chap. 2. 27.—^w 2 Chron. 34. 33; Hosea 7. 14.—³ Hebrew, *in falsehood*.—^x Ezek. 16. 51; 23. 11.—^y 2 Kings 17. 6.

Almighty! A withdrawal of the divine support and protection carries with it all dark and dreadful possibilities. The pall of desolation which for twenty-five centuries has covered this land is a fit but feeble expression of the fearfulness of abandonment by God!

9. Lightness—This rendering of the Hebrew is made under the influence of the ancient Versions, but cannot be vindicated. There is in the Old Testament no clear and sufficient support of this sense. And even were it better supported it does not easily suit the passage. The marginal "*fame*" is nearer, but incorrect. The word for this would be *shem*, (שֵׁם,) while the meaning of *kol* (קוֹל) is *noise*, or *voice*. Hence the rendering should be, *the noise of her whoredoms*, etc., reference being had to the riotous orgies of idolatry.

10. Treacherous sister Judah—Mark the solemn iteration of this accusing phrase in verses 7, 8, 10, and 11. **Feignedly**—Such language as this makes us know that the reformation of Josiah, remarkable and impressive as it was, was not of that radical character which the case demanded. And so we understand how it was that the destruction of the city so soon followed the most splendid religious pageant Jerusalem ever witnessed. 2 Chron. xxxv.

THE CALL TO RETURN, 11-18.

11. Hath justified herself—Israel is less guilty than Judah, because she

thou backsliding Israel, saith the LORD; and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you: for I *am* ² merciful; saith the LORD, and I will not keep *anger* for ever. **13** ^a Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the LORD thy God, and hast ^b scattered thy ways to the ^c strangers ^d under every green tree, and ye have not obeyed my voice, saith the LORD. **14** Turn, O backsliding children, saith the LORD; ^e for I am married unto you:

^a Psa. 86. 15; 103. 8, 9; ver. 5.—^b Lev. 26. 40, etc.; Deut. 30. 1, 2, etc.; Prov. 28. 13.—^c Ver. 2; Ezek. 16. 15, 24, 25.—^d Chap. 2. 25.—^e Deut. 13. 2.—^f Chap. 31. 32; Hosea 2. 19, 20.

had less light. To be false is accounted worse than to be apostate. Honest idolatry is less offensive than hypocritical orthodoxy. To lose truth out of the intellect is sad enough; but to lose it out of the conscience and heart is still worse.

12. Toward the north—Hebrew, *midnight*; "the north" being so designated because it is in the opposite direction to the meridian sun. Here it means the provinces of Assyria, into which Shalmanezar had carried away the ten tribes.

13. Acknowledge—Literally, *know*; that is, see it in its true light. The most fundamental element in all genuine confession is confession to one's self. One must admit his own vileness in his inmost soul before he is prepared for reformation. **Scattered thy ways**—Hast run in all directions in search of false gods. Madly and irrationally has this quest been urged.

14. I am married unto you—A divine tenderness breathes in these words. God still remembers the sacred covenant between himself and his faithless people; and, in spite of their infidelities, looks upon their miseries with sincere and yearning pity. He even turns suppliant himself, and pleads with them to return. The mingling of metaphor in this passage, which starts with the parental and then introduces the conjugal relation, is not a blemish, but reveals the warm feeling which underlies the passage; a feeling that struggles in vain for adequate expression. The two most expressive figures which human experi-

and I will take you ^fone of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion: **15** And I will give you ^gpastors according to mine heart, which shall ^hfeed you with knowledge and understanding. **16** And it shall come to pass, when ye be multiplied and increased in the land, in those days, saith the LORD, they shall say no more, The ark of the covenant of the LORD: ⁱneither shall it ^jcome to mind; neither shall they remember it; neither shall they visit it; neither shall ^kthat be done any

more. **17** At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the LORD; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, ^lto the name of the LORD, to Jerusalem: neither shall they ^mwalk any more after the ⁿimagination of their evil heart. **18** In those days ^othe house of Judah shall walk ^pwith the house of Israel, and they shall come together out of the land of ^qthe north to ^rthe land that I have ^sgiven for an inheritance unto your fathers. **19** But I said, How shall I put thee among the children, and give thee

^f Rom. 11. 5.—^g Chap. 23. 4; Ezek. 34. 23; Eph. 4. 11.—^h Acts 20. 28.—ⁱ Isa. 65. 17.—^j 4 Heb. come upon the heart.—^k Or, it be magnified.—^l Isa. 60. 9.—^m Chap. 11. 8.

⁶ Or, stubbornness.—ⁿ See Isa. 11. 12; Ezek. 37. 16-23; Hosea 1. 11.—^o Or, to.—^p Ver. 12; chap. 31. 8.—^q Or Amos 9. 15.—^r Or, caused your fathers to possess.

ence furnishes are here blended in a way that leaves the impression of an unfathomable depth of meaning behind. **One of a city, and two of a family**—The word rendered “family” is of broad import, and answers in a general way to *stock* or *tribe*. If but “one of a city,” or “two of a tribe,” (evidently a larger term than city,) shall turn to me, I will be careful to save even them. This promise is full and absolute. Though not exclusively Messianic and spiritual, yet, on the other hand, it is not limited to any material restoration. It is one of those broad predictive promises which sweep over the centuries, and are being constantly and everywhere fulfilled. And yet its highest force and significance belong to the highest things, and so the promise contains the glory of the Messianic revelation.

15. Pastors—No matter how few and poor and scattered the flock, they shall have shepherds. Under this term are included, not prophets and priests, but rulers who held to the people a parental relation, and were, under the great Shepherd, their guardians and guides.

16. No more, The ark, etc.—They shall not want the symbol, because they have the high and glorious reality. They shall not need the tables of stone, for God shall write the law on the tables of their hearts. They shall no longer need the symbolized presence of Jehovah, for Jerusalem shall be his throne and dwellingplace. This passage has an exact parallel in

a higher plane in Rev. xxi, 22. “And I saw no temple therein.” Heaven, as has been well said, will be “a templeless, because an all-temple, state.” So the full spiritual revelation of God must of necessity do away with all material symbols.

17. All the nations shall be gathered—Let this passage, the meaning of which is so unmistakable, explain all similar passages. The sense in which the nations of the earth shall gather to Jerusalem, according to this golden vision, is doubtless that in which the Jewish people shall gather there. It only means that *the spiritual Jerusalem shall be the capital of the world*, and all nations shall “bring their glory and honour into it.”

18. Judah shall walk with . . . Israel—The lost harmony shall be restored. Partners in a common exile, they shall rejoice in a common deliverance. Hand in hand shall these wanderers return from the land of “the north,” or midnight, into the warmth and light, the safety and the glory, of the city of God.

THE CONDITIONS OF RESTORATION, 19-25.

19. But—The relation of the thought is completely missed in the English Version. The conjunction is not adversative but continuative—and not “BUT.” **How** is not interrogative, but exclamatory, marking a declaration of God’s gracious purpose, and not, as in the text, the statement of a theological problem. How gloriously will I

"a ⁹ pleasant land, ¹⁰a goodly heritage of the hosts of nations? and I said, 'Thou shalt call me, ⁹My father; and shalt not turn away ¹¹from me.

20 Surely as a wife treacherously departeth from her ¹²husband, so ¹have ye dealt treacherously with me, O house of Israel, saith the LORD. **21** A voice was heard upon ²the high places, weeping and supplications of the children of Israel: for they have perverted their way, and they have forgotten the LORD their God. **22** 'Return, ye backsliding children, and ³I will heal your backslidings. Behold, we come unto thee; for thou art the LORD our God. **23** ⁴Truly in vain is salvation hoped for from the hills,

⁹ *Psa. 106. 24; Ezek. 20. 6; Dan. 8. 9; 11. 16, 41, 45.*—¹⁰ *Heb. land of desire.*—¹¹ *Heb. a heritage of glory, or, beauty.*—¹² *Isa. 63. 16.*—¹ *Heb. from after me.*—² *Heb. friend.*—³ *Isa. 48. 8; chap. 5. 11.*

distinguish thee by the value and the beauty of thy heritage! **Thou—Hebrew, ye;** meaning not Israel collectively, but the individuals thereof.

20. Surely as— Rather, *Just as. Husband—* Hebrew, *friend.* Israel has been false to the holiest obligations, and this would seem to close the door of hope for her return.

21. A voice was heard— And so there is lamentation. The very **high places** which have witnessed their shameless idolatry shall witness their penitential distress. This publicity of their sorrow answers to that of their sin.

22. Answering to this penitence is God's gracious willingness to receive and pardon. The prophet echoes the divine invitation and promise. **Return, ye backsliding children... I will heal your backslidings—** Literally, *Turn, ye turned children, I will heal your turnings.* To this promise they answer, **Behold, we come unto thee, for thou art the Lord our God.**

23. In vain... from the hills— Various translations of this text have been made: "Surely in vain from the hills is the revelry of the mountains."—*Dean Smith.* "As certainly as hills are false, mountains are empty sound," etc.—*Nügelbach.* "Surely hills are lies, the tumult of the mountains."—*Blayney.* "In vain resounds from the hills revelry, even from the mountains."

and from the multitude of mountains: ⁵truly in the LORD our God is the salvation of Israel. **24** ⁶For shame hath devoured the labour of our fathers from our youth; their flocks and their herds, their sons and their daughters. **25** We lie down in our shame, and our confusion covereth us: ⁷for we have sinned against the LORD our God, we and our fathers, from our youth even unto this day, and ⁸have not obeyed the voice of the LORD our God.

CHAPTER IV.

IF thou wilt return, O Israel, saith the LORD, ¹return unto me: and if thou wilt put away thine abominations out of

¹ *Isaiah 15. 2.*—² *Verse 14; Hosea 14. 1.*—³ *Hosea 6. 1; 14. 4.*—⁴ *Psaln 121. 1, 2.*—⁵ *Psaln 8. 8.*—⁶ *Chapter 11. 13; Hosea 9. 10.*—⁷ *Ezra 9. 7.*—⁸ *Chap. 22. 21.*—⁹ *Chap. 3. 1, 23; Joel 2. 12.*

—*Ewald.* "Truly the sound from the hills, from the mountains, is become falsehood."—*Keil.* This last conforms closely to the original, and gives a sense manifestly congruous with the context. The passage states the falseness of idolatrous trusts, and calls back the thought of the people to the one God as the only ground of confidence.

24. Shame hath devoured, etc.— Literally, *the shame*, namely, the shame-god, an opprobrious epithet for Baal, whose worship had eaten up the substance of the people and even devoured their children.

25. We lie down in our shame, etc.— We will patiently submit to this misery and disgrace which our own infamous sin has invited.

CHAPTER IV.

THE CALL TO RETURN, 1-18.

The chapter-division here, as in the last instance, is peculiarly unfortunate. There is the closest relation between the concluding verses of the preceding chapter and the beginning of this. The words contained in the first two verses of the present chapter are Jehovah's answer to the words of shame and penitence in the last verse of the preceding, and cannot be fully appreciated except this relation is kept in mind.

1, 2. Return unto me— This second "return" is a mere repetition of the former, and falls into the same relation.

my sight, then shalt thou not remove. **2^b** And thou shalt swear, The Lord liveth, ^cin truth, in judgment, and in righteousness; ^dand the nations shall bless themselves in him, and in him shall they ^eglory.

3 For thus saith the Lord to the men of Judah and Jerusalem, ^fBreak up your fallow ground, and ^gsow not among thorns. **4^h** Circumcise yourselves to the Lord, and take away the foreskins of your heart, ye men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem; lest my fury come forth like fire, and burn that none can quench it, because of the evil of

^b Deut. 10. 20; Isa. 45. 23; 65. 16; see chap. 5. 2.—^c Isa. 48. 1; Zech. 8. 8.—^d Gen. 22. 18; Psa. 72. 17; Gal. 3. 8.—^e Isa. 45. 25; 1 Cor. 1. 31.—^f Hosea 10. 12.—^g Matt. 13. 7, 22.—^h Deut. 10. 16; 30. 6; chap. 9. 26; Rom. 2. 28, 29;

The protasis extends so as to include the word **righteousness**, making the reading of the first two verses as follows: *If thou wilt return, O Israel, . . . wilt return unto me, saith Jehovah, and if thou wilt put away abominations from before me, and shalt not wander to and fro, and shalt swear, as Jehovah liveth, in truth, and right, and uprightness: then shall the nations bless themselves in him, and in him shall they make their boast.*

3, 4. For, connects the two following verses with the preceding, as being the ground of them. That these verses refer to Judah, while the preceding refer to Israel, suggests a difficulty more apparent than real. For Jeremiah was the prophet of Judah, and the reference to Israel was for the sake of Judah. Hence, having thus prepared the way, it was fitting that he should urge home the lesson on those for whom he laboured. **To the men**—Literally, *to each man*. **Break up**, etc.—Keil translates, *Break up for yourselves new ground*. As much as to say, Prepare new ground for cultivation: enter upon a new life. Thoroughly prepare the field of your hearts, so that the good seed of repentance may not fall among thorns. See Matt. xiii, 7, and Hosea x, 12. **Circumcise**—A call to entire consecration. The phrase **to the Lord** is one of emphasizing force. It implies that not a mere ceremony is required, but an actual putting away of spiritual impurity. **Lo**

your doings. **5** Declare ye in Judah, and publish in Jerusalem; and say, Blow ye the trumpet in the land: cry, gather together, and say, ⁱAssemble yourselves, and let us go into the defended cities. **6** Set up the standard toward Zion: ^jretire, stay not: for I will bring evil from the ^knorth, and a great ^ldestruction. **7^l** The lion is come up from his thicket, and ^mthe destroyer of the Gentiles is on his way; he is gone forth from his place ⁿto make thy land desolate: and thy cities shall be laid waste, without an inhabitant. **8** For this ^ogird you with sackcloth, lament

Col. 2. 11.—ⁱ Chap. 8. 14.—1 Or, *strengthen*.—^j Chap. 1. 13, 14, 15; 6. 1, 22.—2 Heb. *breaking*.—^k 2 Kings 24. 1; chap. 5. 6; Dan. 7. 4.—^l m Chap. 25. 9.—^m Isa. 1. 7; chap. 2. 15.—^o Isa. 22. 12; chap. 6. 26.

my fury, etc., etc.—A consciousness of sin is as fuel which is sure to be ignited by the divine presence. Consult chap viii, 20; Amos v, 6, and Psa. lxxxix, 46.

5. Blow ye the trumpet, etc.—The invasion of a hostile army is proclaimed. The cry of alarm resounds throughout the land. The inhabitants are called to betake themselves to their cities. From the first, the most fundamental notion of a city was that of a covert from danger;—a place fortified and thus protected from hostile incursions, and so supplying the conditions of possible culture and development. Thus the "city" which Cain built was simply a natural stronghold selected and built up in such a way as to become a startingpoint and centre of that world-culture which so eminently characterized the Cainitic race.

6. Set up the standard—Making it point toward Zion, to show the route to a place of safety.

7. The lion—Literally, *a lion*. **The destroyer of the Gentiles**—Rather, *destroyer of nations*; a vivid description of such beasts of prey as are figured by Assyria and Babylon.

8. Gird you with sackcloth—This calamity, which on its surface would seem to be merely human, attributable solely to the ambition and rapacity of the Babylonish nation, is here referred to as an expression of the fierce anger of God: thus illustrating the truth so often brought out in the Old Testa-

and howl: for the fierce anger of the Lord is not turned back from us. **9** And it shall come to pass at that day, saith the Lord, *that* the heart of the king shall perish, and the heart of the princes; and the priests shall be astonished, and the prophets shall wonder. **10** Then said I, Ah, Lord God! ^psurely thou hast greatly deceived this people and Jerusalem, ^qsaying, Ye shall have peace; whereas the sword reacheth unto the soul. **11** At that time shall it be said to this people and to Jerusalem, ^rA dry wind of the high places in the wilderness toward the daughter of my people, not to fan, nor to cleanse, **12** *Even* ^aa full wind from those *places* shall come unto me: now also ^bwill I ^cgive sentence against them. **13** Behold, he shall come up as clouds, and ^dhis

chariots *shall be* as a whirlwind: ^ehis horses are swifter than eagles. Woe unto us! for we are spoiled. **14** O Jerusalem, ^fwash thine heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved. How long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee? **15** For a voice declareth ^gfrom Dan, and publisheth affliction from mount Ephraim. **16** Make ye mention to the nations; behold, publish against Jerusalem, *that* watchers come ^hfrom a far country, and give out their voice against the cities of Judah. **17** ⁱAs keepers of a field, are they against her round about; because she hath been rebellious against me, saith the Lord. **18** ^jThy way and thy doings have procured these *things* unto thee; *this is* thy wickedness, because it is bitter, because it reacheth unto thine heart.

^p Ezek. 14. 9; 2 Thess. 2. 11. — ^q Chap. 5. 12; 14. 13. — ^r Chap. 51. 1; Ezek. 17. 10; Hos. 13. 15. — ^s Or, *a fuller wind than those*. — ^t Chap. 1. 16. — ^u Heb. *utter judgments*. — ^v Isa. 5. 28.

^u Deut. 28. 49; Lam. 4. 19; Hosea 8. 1; Hab. 1. 8. — ^v Isa. 1. 16; James 4. 8. — ^w Chap. 8. 16. — ^x Chap. 5. 15. — ^y 2 Kings 25. 1, 4. — ^z Psa. 107. 17; Isa. 50. 1; chap. 2. 17, 19.

ment, that God has a purpose even in the actions of evil agents. The grand condition of safety is harmony with God. His favour is the only defence which man's hate cannot beat down.

10. Ah, Lord God, etc. — This is interjectional. It is Jeremiah's sigh of sorrow and deprecation. He confronts what seems to be a vision of utter ruin and extermination, and protests that it is incongruous with God's promises to his people. **Thou hast greatly deceived this people** — In assuring them of thine everlasting covenant, while **the sword reacheth unto the soul**. It is better to take this view than to assume a reference to the lying spirits in false prophets, as do most commentators.

11. A dry wind — "*A hot wind*," Keil; "*a violent wind*," Fürst. The reference is to the simoom, which is too fierce to be used for winnowing, as it would carry away both chaff and grain; a fit symbol of irresistible destruction. The figure of the lion sets forth the fierceness and bloodthirstiness of their enemies; the simoom, their resistlessness.

12. Full wind from those — Rather, *fuller than these*; namely, the winds which are used for cleansing the grain.

13. Behold — Prophetic vision.

Clouds . . . whirlwind . . . eagles —

Located in the same region as that before suggested in the figure of the dry wind. The dark, angry, swiftly moving masses of clouds, the destructive sweep of the tornado, and the sudden and resistless swoop of the birds of prey, constitute the terrible imagery by which the great danger of the nation is set forth.

14. O Jerusalem, wash thine heart — Again does the prophet pause, but this time it is not to remonstrate with God, but to plead with man. In the presence of this great calamity, so rapidly and resistlessly moving on, he urges the people to hide themselves in God, and to cast out all evil from their own hearts, for it is only when there is evil within us that there can be evil without us. Sin is the only fuel of the fire which burns to our destruction.

15. A voice . . . from Dan . . . mount Ephraim — Indicating the direction and marking the progress of the coming danger.

17. Keepers of a field — As fields in Palestine were not enclosed they had to be watched. The huts, or lodges, of these "keepers" might be seen in every direction commanding views of the entire country. Hence the comparison of this verse.

19 My ^abowels, my bowels! I am pained at ^amy very heart; my heart maketh a noise in me; I cannot hold my peace, because thou hast heard, O my soul, the sound of the trumpet, the alarm of war. **20** ^bDestruction upon destruction is cried; for the whole land is spoiled: suddenly are ^cmy tents spoiled, and my curtains in a moment. **21** How long shall I see the standard, and hear the sound of the trumpet? **22** For my people ^dis foolish, they have not known me; they ^eare sottish children, and they have none understanding: ^fthey ^gare wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge. **23** ^hI beheld the earth, and, lo, ⁱit ^jwas ^kwithout form, and void; and the

heavens, and they ^lhad no light. **24** ^mI beheld the mountains, and, lo, they trembled, and all the hills moved lightly. **25** I beheld, and, lo, ⁿthere was no man, and ^oall the birds of the heavens were fled. **26** I beheld, and, lo, the fruitful place ^pwas a wilderness, and all the cities thereof were broken down at the presence of the LORD, and by his fierce anger. **27** For thus hath the LORD said, The whole land shall be desolate; ^qyet will I not make a full end. **28** For this ^rshall the earth mourn, and ^sthe heavens above be black: because I have spoken ^tit, I have purposed ^uit, and ^vwill not repent, neither will I turn back from it. **29** The whole city shall flee for the noise of the horsemen and bow-

^a Isa. 15. 5; 16. 11; 21. 3; 22. 4; chap. 9. 1, 10; see Luke 19. 42. — ^b Heb. *the walls of my heart*. — ^c Psal. 42. 7; Ezek. 7. 26. — ^d Chap. 10. 20. — ^e Rom. 16. 19.

^e Isa. 24. 19. — ^f Gen. 1. 2. — ^g Isa. 5. 25; Ezek. 38. 20. — ^h Zeph. 1. 3. — ⁱ Chap. 5. 10, 18; 30. 11; 46. 28. — ^j Hosea 4. 3. — ^k Isa. 5. 30; 50. 3. — ^l Num. 23. 19; chap. 7. 16.

LAMENT FOR THE COMING DESOLATION AND RUIN, 19-31.

19. My bowels, my bowels—Again is the course of thought interrupted by an expression of Jeremiah's personal experiences. For it is much better to interpret these as the words of Jeremiah than of the people. But the prophet stands for all the friends of God. What he says in his own character, and for himself, expands into an expression in behalf of the people. He passes, in his own thought, perhaps unconsciously, from individual suffering to national desolation. Hence, the expression in verse 20, "my tents." **I am pained**—The original word here is, with little doubt, a mongrel form. It is an instance exceeding rare of the Keri having affected the form of the Kethib. The form is probably from כָּרַח, (*chul*), "to writhe in pain."

20. Tents spoiled . . . curtains—These terms are used synonymously as corresponding members in the parallelism. Such passages as this indicate that tents were a common, if not the most common, form of Jewish habitations at this time.

22. My people . . . foolish—The answer to the question in the preceding verse. The statement substantially implies—This trouble is not fortuitous, neither is it unjust, but has come from Israel's wickedness.

23-26. I beheld, etc.—Resuming the general course of thought, another group of images is brought forward to show the fearfulness of the destruction impending. And this time they are the most terrible which nature furnishes; the same which, in other passages, are employed to set forth God's great judgment days. See Isa. xiii, 10; Joel ii, 10, etc., etc. The established order by which time is both created and measured here gives place to a kind of primeval chaos. The earth again becomes desolation and emptiness—**without form, and void**. The lights in the **heavens** go out in darkness. The **mountains** tremble to their bases, and the **hills** totter to their fall. All life of man, and even of birds, has fled away; only darkness, solitude, and death remain. The **fruitful place** (Carmel) is a **wilderness**, and all the **cities** are destroyed. Though Jeremiah has sometimes been set down as wanting in force and finish of style, yet there is no similar passage in the Bible which surpasses this.

27. Not . . . a full end—Again does the light shine through the gloom. God has not forsaken his people utterly. Appalling as is this picture, yet God's faithfulness is beneath, behind, and over all.

28, 29. For this, etc.—But once more does the prophet return to the

men; they shall go into thickets, and climb up upon the rocks: every city *shall be* forsaken, and not a man dwell therein. **30** And *when thou art* spoiled, what wilt thou do? Though thou clothest thyself with crimson, though thou deckest thee with ornaments of gold, though thou rentest thy face with painting, in vain shalt thou make thyself fair; *thy* lovers will despise thee, they will seek thy life. **31** For I have heard a voice as of a woman in travail, and the anguish as of her that bringeth forth her first child, the voice of the daughter of Zion, that bewaileth herself, that spreadeth her hands, saying, Woe is me now! for my soul is wearied because of murderers.

n 2 Kings 9. 30; Ezek. 23. 40.—*6* Heb. *eyes*.—*o* Chap. 23. 24, 25; Lam. 1. 2, 19.—*p* Isa. 1. 15; Lam. 1. 17.—*a* Ezek. 23. 30.—*b* Gen. 13. 23, etc.; Psa. 12. 1.

sad story. In language more simple and intelligible he sets forth the coming desolation. The city shall be **forsaken**, and the people shall take refuge in the **thickets** and clefts of the **rocks**.

30. When thou art spoiled—No *arts*, as of a courtesan, such as the putting on of **crimson** clothing and **ornaments of gold**, and *rending* or enlarging the eyes with pigment, can turn away the ruin. This pigment was a black powder made of sulphur-antimony, and was applied by drawing a style smeared with it horizontally between the closed eyelids. This Jeremiah calls *rending the face* (eyes) with paint.

31. I have heard—But all in vain. The prophet hears the cry of distress as the agony of a **woman in travail**. The daughter of Zion stretches out her hands in unavailing supplication, and falls beneath the stroke of her **murderers**.

CHAPTER V.

UNIVERSAL CORRUPTION MAKES PARDON IMPOSSIBLE, 1-10.

1. Seek . . . a man—The thought is not completed at this latter word, but is carried forward to the end of the verse. The meaning is not, "seek a man"—that is, *any* man—but, "a man" who **executeth judgment** and **seeketh the truth**. Of course,

CHAPTER V.

RUN ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, *if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth; and I will pardon it.* **2** And *though they say, The Lord liveth; surely they swear falsely.* **3** O Lord, *are not thine eyes upon the truth? thou hast stricken them, but they have not grieved; thou hast consumed them, but they have refused to receive correction: they have made their faces harder than a rock; they have refused to return.* **4** Therefore I said, Surely these *are* poor; they are foolish: for *they know not the way of the Lord,*

c Gen. 18. 26.—*d* Titus 1. 16.—*e* Chap. 4. 2.—*f* Chap. 7. 9.—*g* 2 Chron. 16. 9.—*h* Isa. 1. 5; 9. 13; chap. 2. 30.—*i* Chap. 7. 28; Zeph. 3. 2.—*k* Chap. 8. 7.

language of this kind must not be construed with servile literalness. It is simply a strong statement of prevalent corruption. And yet there were doubtless many who were still faithful to the true God, and some of these are mentioned in this book. **Broad places**—Such as the open spaces at the gates, at the meeting of the streets, the markets, and all places where the people congregate. **Truth**—As is common, especially in the Old Testament, this word has here a subjective meaning—truth in character rather than truth in belief.

2. Falsely—Implying an outward confession of Jehovah, but combining with it spiritual hypocrisy, falling in perfectly with the intimations which came in other ways, that these were times of outward rather than inward religion.

3. Upon the truth—This phrase stands over against the term "falsely," in the preceding verse. If there is not first honesty, no other virtue is possible. Even the oath of fealty of those who are false at heart is an abomination.

4, 5. This corruption extends to high as well as low. The prophet thought that those who showed this lack of truth and uprightness were of the baser sort—the **poor** and the **foolish**; but on betaking himself to the **great men** he found the same state of

nor the judgment of their God. **5** I will get me unto the great men, and will speak unto them; for ¹ they have known the way of the LORD, and the judgment of their God: but these have altogether ² broken the yoke, and burst the bonds. **6** Wherefore ³ a lion out of the forest shall slay them, ⁴ and a wolf of the ⁵ evenings shall spoil them, ⁶ a leopard shall watch over their cities: every one that goeth out thence shall be torn in pieces: because their transgressions are

¹ Micah 3. 1.—² m Psa. 2. 3.—³ n Chap. 4. 7.
⁴ o Psa. 104. 20; Hab. 1. 8; Zeph. 3. 3.—⁵ 1 Or, deserts.—⁶ p Hos. 13. 7.—⁷ 2 Heb. are strong.

things; these have altogether broken the yoke, and burst the bonds—that is, of duty.

6. Lion...wolf...leopard—This is a drawing out in detail of the curse denounced in Lev. xxvi. 22: "I will also send wild beasts among you," etc. The strongest, the most ravenous, and the swiftest of the beasts are here mentioned, as showing the thorough fulfilment of this threatening. The verbs in this verse should be rendered by the English present rather than the future, for the intention seems to be to point out the infliction of this curse. **Of the evenings**—Rather, *of the plains*. This, in the parallelism, stands over against **out of the forest**, which in itself is strongly confirmatory of the above rendering.

7. How—Rather, *why*. **Shall I pardon thee**—The form of the word translated "pardon" is difficult to account for. The Masoretes evidently considered it a future, and so have given as a Keri the usual form for the Kal future of the lamedh guttural. The form in the text may be a future after the type of the perfect verb, of which there are also other instances among the lamedh guttural verbs; or it may be, as suggested by Fürst, Keil, and others, that aleph in the text has become substituted for lamedh, the two being very much alike in the MSS. If this is so, the verb is an infinitive, and the meaning given above is more clearly brought out, *How could one pardon thee?* **Thy children have... sworn**—There is doubt and disagreement as to the original text in this

many, and their backslidings ² are increased.

7 How shall I pardon thee for this! thy children have forsaken me, and ³ sworn by *them* that ⁴ are no gods: ⁵ when I had fed them to the full, they then committed adultery, and assembled themselves by troops in the harlots' houses. **8** ⁶ They were as fed horses in the morning: every one ⁷ neighed after his neighbour's wife. **9** ⁸ Shall I not visit for these things? saith the LORD:

¹ q Josh. 23. 7; Zeph. 1. 5.—² r Deut. 32. 21; Gal. 4. 8.—³ s Deut. 32. 15.—⁴ t Ezek. 22. 11.—⁵ u Chap. 13. 27.—⁶ v Verse 29; chap. 9. 9.

place. Most of the Versions and about forty MSS., together with the Keri, give the reading, *I had sworn them*; that is, had bound them by an oath to fidelity. But the reading which is the basis of the Authorized Version is easier, and agrees in sentiment with many other passages. The rule, however, is, in disputed readings, that the more difficult is likely to be genuine, as its substitution for an easier one cannot readily be accounted for, while the reverse process is the natural one. Besides, the thought in the reading "I have sworn them," is even more perfectly suited to the remainder of the verse. The sense, then, is, I bound them by the marriage covenant, but they committed adultery. **Harlots' houses**—Literally, *house of the harlot*; an expression doubtless intended to cover both carnal uncleanness and spiritual adultery.

8. Fed horses—The lechery of horses is alluded to in many passages, for example, Ezek. xxiii, 20. In Ezek. xxii, 11, the thing stated in this verse is brought out more plainly and fully. **In the morning**—Many suggestions have been made as to the meaning of the original word thus translated, as "from meshech," "stallions," "draught horses," "lustful," etc. The least doubtful thing is, that the sense of the word is missed in the Authorized Version, though some are still disposed to defend it. The view which best commends itself is, that the word is a Hiphil participle, from the root which means *to wander*, and hence should be rendered, as in the Ethiopic, *they roam about*.

* and shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?

10 * Go ye up upon her walls, and destroy; * but make not a full end: take away her battlements; for they *are* not the Lord's. 11 For * the house of Israel and the house of Judah have dealt very treacherously against me, saith the Lord. 12 * They have belied the Lord, and said, *b* It is not he; neither shall evil come upon us; * neither shall we see sword nor famine: 13 And the prophets shall become wind, and the word *is* not in them: thus shall it be

done unto them. 14 Wherefore thus saith the Lord God of hosts, Because ye speak this word, *d* behold, I will make my words in thy mouth fire, and this people wood, and it shall devour them.

15 Lo, I will bring a *e* nation upon you from far, O house of Israel, saith the Lord: it *is* a mighty nation, it *is* an ancient nation, a nation whose language thou knowest not, neither understandest what they say. 16 Their quiver *is* as an open sepulchre, they *are* all mighty men. 17 And they shall eat up thine *f* harvest and thy bread, *which* thy sons

a Chap. 44, 22. — *α* Chap. 39, 8. — *γ* Chap. 4, 27; verse 18. — *z* Chap. 3, 26. — *α* 2 Chron. 35, 16; chap. 4, 10. — *b* Isa. 23, 15. — *c* Chap. 14, 13.

d Chap. 1, 9. — *e* Deut. 28, 49. — *Isa.* 5, 26; chap. 1, 15; 6, 22. — *f* Isa. 39, 3; chap. 4, 16. — *g* Lev. 26, 16; Deut. 28, 31, 33.

10. **Go ye up upon her walls**—The word rendered "walls" occurs nowhere else in this form and in this sense. In Ezek. xxvii, 25, the same word is translated in the English Version, "did sing of thee." Fürst gives it here the meaning *palms*. But this sense is most unlikely, the palm being neither so common nor so characteristic as to justify its use in such a passage as this. There is, indeed, no sufficient reason for rejecting the sense of "walls," indicated by all the important versions. This unusual form of the plural has several parallels, or at least analogous forms; as, for instance, the plurals of *דֹּם*, *day*, *דָּשָׁן*, *head*, etc. The sense, however, is not walls, as of a city, but of a vineyard. **Battlements**—Rather, *tendrils*. The word is used in Isaiah xviii, 5. The *stock* of Judah's vine was not to be destroyed, but only the branches which had degenerated out of their kind.

GOD'S WORD BY HIS PROPHETS WILL BE FULFILLED IN PUNISHMENT, 11-18.

12, 13. **Belied the Lord**—Either by stating that he does not exist, or, more probably, that it is not he who speaks by the prophets threatening these calamities. The thirteenth verse is a continuation of the same denial. The prophets who predict our ruin shall come to naught, because *he that speaketh* (not *the word*) **is not in them**. Some understand this as the language of God with reference to the false prophets, but that view is not to be preferred.

14. **My words**—Still God's, though

spoken by Jeremiah. **Fire**—Rather, *as a fire*. The words, and the things expressed by them, are taken together. This threatening of judgments would be fulfilled, and so this word will be like the "fire" as to its devouring energy. See also Isa. i, 31, and x, 17.

15. **House of Israel**—Judah, which now represents the true Israel of God. **Mighty nation...ancient nation**—The Babylonian. "Mighty"—rather, *firm*, *enduring*. The epithet "ancient" is well vindicated by the statement in Genesis x, 10, that this nation was founded by Nimrod. This makes the people Hamitic in origin, a fact which has been denied, (Bunsen,) but has been of late fully demonstrated. In this, Homer (*Odys.*, i, 23, 24) agrees with Moses, for he represents the Ethiopians as being both east and west of the Arabian Gulf. That their language is strange is brought in to heighten the force of the description by creating a sense of mystery and distance.

16. **Their quiver is as an open sepulchre**—Some conjecture this language to be used in allusion to the shape of the quiver; others, with a more delicate poetical sensibility, say, Because filled with death-dealing weapons, so that to see it is to see an open grave. The bowmen of the Assyrian, and probably also of the Babylonian, army, were especially formidable. (See LAYARD'S *Monuments of Assyria*.)

17. **They shall eat up thine harvest**—The English differs from the other Versions on this passage, and

and thy daughters should eat: they shall eat up thy flocks and thine herds: they shall eat up thy vines and thy fig trees: they shall impoverish thy fenced cities, wherein thou trustedst, with the sword. **18** Nevertheless in those days, saith the Lord, **1** ^a will not make a full end with you.

19 And it shall come to pass, when ye shall say, ¹ Wherefore doeth the Lord our God all these things unto us? then shalt thou answer them, Like as ye have ^a forsaken me, and served strange gods in your land, so ¹ shall ye serve strangers in a land *that is* not yours. **20** Declare this in the house of Jacob, and publish it in Judah, saying, **21** Hear now this, O ^m foolish people, and without ^a understanding; which have eyes, and see not; which have ears, and hear not: **22** ^a Fear ye not me? saith the Lord:

^h Chapter 4. 27.—ⁱ Deut. 29. 24, etc.; 1 Kings 9. 8, 9; chapter 13. 22; 16. 10.—^k Chapter 2. 13.—^l Deut. 28. 48.—^m Isaiah 6. 9; Ezekiel 12. 2; Matthew 13. 14; John 12. 40; Acts 23. 26; Romans 11. 8.—ⁿ Hebrew, *heart*, Hosea 7. 11.—ⁿ Revelation 15. 4.

clearly misses the construction. It should be rendered, as by Keil, *It shall eat up thy sons and thy daughters: it shall eat up thy flocks and thy cattle; eat up thy vine and thy fig tree.* **They shall impoverish**—Rather, *it shall break down*. The word is used besides only in Mal. i. 4.

18. Not make a full end—How often does this merciful refrain come in!

JUDAH'S OBEDURACY WILL CALL DOWN UPON HER RUIN, 19-31.

19. Like as—The penalty answers to the sin. Because Judah in her own land served the gods of foreigners, so she must serve strangers in a foreign land.

21. Hear . . . this—The prophet strives to impress upon the people the greatness of their sin, and so of their folly. As in all cases of persistent wickedness it is such stupidity or insanity as men show who have eyes, and see not; or ears, and hear not.

22. Fear ye not me—The greatness of God measures the greatness of sin. They have set at defiance that God against whom the furious sea cannot successfully rebel. **Placed**

will ye not tremble at my presence, which have placed the sand *for* the ^a bound of the sea by a perpetual decree, that it cannot pass it: and though the waves thereof toss themselves, yet can they not prevail; though they rear, yet can they not pass over it? **23** But this people hath a revolting and a rebellious heart; they are revolted and gone. **24** Neither say they in their heart, Let us now fear the Lord our God, ^a that giveth rain, both the ^a former and the latter, in his season: ^a he reserveth unto us the appointed weeks of the harvest.

25 ^a Your iniquities have turned away these things, and your sins have withholden good things from you. **26** For among my people are found wicked men: ^a they ¹ lay wait, as he that setteth snares; they set a trap, they catch men. **27** As a ^a cage is full of birds, so are

^o Job 26. 10; 38. 10, 11; Psal. 104. 9; Prov. 8. 29.—^p Psal. 147. 8; chap. 14. 22; Matt. 5. 45; Acts 14. 17.—^q Deut. 11. 14; Joel 2. 23.—^r Gen. 8. 22.—^s Chap. 3. 3.—^t Or, *they pry as fowls lie in wait*.—^u Prov. 1. 11, 17, 18; Hab. 1. 15.—^v Or, *coop*.

the sand—What so resistless as the sea? What so yielding as the sand? And yet by the appointment of God this contemptible thing is the conqueror!

24. That giveth rain—The former rain falls from the middle of October until the first of December, and is necessary to the germination of the newly sown seed. The latter rain falls just before the reaping, which commences about April 1, and so is necessary to the perfection of the harvest. Upon them the very life of the people depended. And yet only that God against whom they had rebelled could give them. How evidently, then, is the apostasy of the people an insane severing of the tie that bound them to life! **Reserveth . . . weeks of the harvest**—The only hope of the people. God faithfully keeps them for these rebellious ones, thus showing his wonderful patience and tenderness.

26-28. Wicked men—The fact of their rebellion, as well as its extent and bitter fruits, is set forth in the prevalent corruption. Men make a prey of each other; they are false to one another; they are prosperous in their wickedness; they close their

their houses full of deceit: therefore they are become great, and waxen rich.

28 They are waxen ^{fat}, they shine: yea, they overpass the deeds of the wicked: they judge not ^{the cause}, the cause of the fatherless, ^{yet} they prosper; and the right of the needy do they not judge. **29** ^{Shall I not visit for these things?} saith the LORD: shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?

30 ^{A wonderful and} ^{horrible} thing is committed in the land; **31** The prophets prophesy ^{falsely}, and the priests ^{bear rule by their means}; and my people ^{love to have it so}: and what will ye do in the end thereof?

^t Deut. 32. 15.—^u Isa. 1. 23; Zech. 7. 10.—^v Job 12. 6; Psa. 73. 12; chap. 12. 1.—^w Verse 9; Mal. 3. 5.—^x Or, *Astonishment and filthiness*.—^y Chap. 23. 14; Hosea 6. 10.—^z Chap. 14. 14; 24. 25, 26; Ezek. 13. 6.

ears to the prayer of the needy and the orphaned.

31. Bear rule by their means—Rather, *under their lead*. The passage is not free from difficulty, as is shown by the various interpretations which have been given. One of the original words is ambiguous as to its root-form. It may be from the root יָרַךְ,

to go down, or יָרַךְ, *to rule*. Nägelsbach

prefers the former, and so translates *go down upon their hands*. Keil, Noyes, and others, prefer the latter, and translate *rule upon their hands*, that is, according to their guidance. **Love to have it so**—The saddest count in the indictment! The crimes committed are chargeable, not upon the agents alone, but also upon those who in their hearts consent. **The end**—That is, the judgment. Can you turn it away or escape from it?

CHAPTER VI.

COMING OF THE INVADING ARMY, 1-5.

1. Children of Benjamin—Mentioned either because they were the prophet's countrymen, or as a designation of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the city being situated in the territory of Benjamin. **Tekoa** lies about eleven miles south of Jerusalem, and is mentioned because it would be a natural rallying point for fugitives fleeing before an enemy coming from the north.

CHAPTER VI.

O YE children of Benjamin, gather yourselves to flee out of the midst of Jerusalem, and blow the trumpet in Tekoa, and set up a sign of fire in ^a Beth-haccereim: ^b for evil appeareth out of the north, and great destruction. **2** I have likened the daughter of Zion to a ^c comely and delicate woman. **3** The shepherds with their flocks shall come unto her; ^d they shall pitch *their* tents against her round about; they shall feed every one in his place. **4** ^e Prepare ye war against her; arise, and let us go up ^f at noon. Woe unto us! for the day goeth away, and the shadows of the evening are stretched out. **5** Arise,

⁷ Or, *take into their hands*.—^z Micah 2. 11.—^a Neh. 3. 14.—^b Chap. 1. 14; 4. 6.—^c Or, *dwelling at home*.—^d 3 Kings 25. 1, 4; chap. 4. 17.—^e Chap. 51. 27; Joel 3. 9.—^f Chap. 15. 8.

Sign of fire—Rather, *set up a signal*. The idea of fire is not in the original.

Beth-haccereim—A beacon station, situated, according to Jerome, between Jerusalem and Tekoa; perhaps the modern Frank Mountain.

2. I have likened—Rather, *I have laid waste*. The city is personified as a beautiful and delicately-reared woman to whom desolation has come. But Nägelsbach, followed by Dean Smith, prefers the sense of the Authorized Version, and translates the whole verse: "To a pasturage, yea, a luxuriant pasturage, have I likened the daughter of Zion."

3. The shepherds . . shall come—The coming destruction is set forth under the familiar figure of shepherds with their flocks, who eat up the substance of the land. The figure of shepherds is a common one for princes and people.

4. Prepare ye war—Literally, *sanctify ye war*, in allusion to the fact that warlike expeditions were undertaken with religious solemnities. Joel iii. 9. **At noon**—Showing the impatience of the people for the attack. They clamour to commence it even under the fierce heat of midday. Then comes the language of disappointment, that the **shadows of the evening are stretched out** before the end is compassed; and it is followed by another eager cry for a night attack. Verse 5.

and let us go by night, and let us destroy her palaces.

¶ For thus hath the Lord of hosts said, Hew ye down trees, and ² cast a mount against Jerusalem: this is the city to be visited; she is wholly oppression in the midst of her. 7 ¹ As a fountain casteth out her waters, so she casteth out her wickedness: ² violence and spoil is heard in her; before me continually is grief and wounds. 8 Be thou instructed, O Jerusalem, lest ³ my soul depart from thee; lest I make thee desolate, a land not inhabited.

9 Thus saith the Lord of hosts, They shall thoroughly glean the remnant of Israel as a vine: turn back thine hand as a grapegatherer into the baskets.

10 To whom shall I speak, and give warning, that they may hear? Behold, their ¹ ear is uncircumcised, and they cannot hearken: behold, ² the word of the Lord is unto them a reproach; they have no delight in it. 11 There-

fore I am full of the fury of the Lord: ¹ I am weary with holding in: I will pour it out ^m upon the children abroad, and upon the assembly of young men together: for even the husband with the wife shall be taken the aged with *him that is full of days*. 12 And ⁿ their houses shall be turned unto others, *with their fields and wives together*: for I will stretch out my hand upon the inhabitants of the land, saith the Lord. 13 For from the least of them even unto the greatest of them every one is given to ^o covetousness; and from the prophet even unto the priest ^v every one dealeth falsely. 14 They have ^p healed also the ⁴ hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, ^q saying, Peace, peace; when *there is no peace*. 15 Were they ^r ashamed when they had committed abomination? nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush; therefore they shall fall among them that fall: at the time *that I visit them*

2 Or, *pour out the engine of shot*.—*f* Isa. 57. 20.—*g* Psal. 55. 9, 10, 11; chap. 20. 8; Ezek. 7. 11, 23.—*h* Ezek. 23. 18; Hosea 9. 12.—3 Heb. *be loosed, or, disjoined*.—*i* Chap. 7. 26; Acts 7. 51; see Exod. 6. 12.—*k* Chap. 20. 8.

1 Chap. 20. 9.—*m* Chap. 9. 21.—*n* Deut. 28. 30; chap. 8. 10.—*o* Isa. 56. 11; chap. 8. 10; 14. 18; 23. 11; Mic. 3. 5, 11.—*p* Chap. 8. 11; Ezek. 13. 10.—4 Heb. *bruise, or, breach*.—*q* Chap. 4. 10; 14. 13; 23. 17.—*r* Chap. 3. 3; 8. 12.

THE SIEGE, 6-8.

6. **Hew ye down trees**—In Deut. xx, 19, the Israelites were forbidden to cut down fruit trees in the siege, but here the enemies of Jerusalem are commanded to hew down her trees without reservation. Some think they were to be used in the construction of a rampart and for battering rams; but there is no proof that the orientals prosecuted their sieges by walls of circumvallation. On the contrary, this plan of warfare seems to have been confined to the Greeks and Romans. It would seem, then, that the trees were to be cut down simply to clear the approaches to the city. **Cast**—Literally, *pour out*. It refers to the carrying of the earth in baskets, and pouring it out to make the **mount**. When this "mount" was carried up to the top of the walls the assault was made.

7. **As a fountain casteth out**—The difficulties in the first sentence of this verse are very serious, but the Authorized Version is to be approved. It is much more intelligible and expressive than any other which has

been proposed, and is easily vindicated as a translation.

8. **Be thou instructed**—Rather, more strongly, *chastised*.

JERUSALEM'S AND ISRAEL'S OVERTHROW, 9-15.

9. **Baskets**—Rather, *tendrils*. The figure is the gleanings of the vine, that no grapes may escape. The enemy will not be satisfied with one devastating campaign, but will repeat his inroad.

11. **Full of the fury**—Note how this is visited on all classes: **Children... young men... husband... wife... the aged with him that is full of days**. This last expression describes one who has reached the utmost limit of age. In the two following verses these individualizing specifications are continued.

14. **Healed... slightly**—Alas! how has this ever been the universal tendency? The deep depravity is not uncovered. The healing is too often only in word and appearance, and not in reality.

15. The first sentence is not interrogative but declarative: "They are

they shall be cast down, saith the LORD. **16** Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the "old paths, where *is* the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find "rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk *therein*. **17** Also I set "watchmen over you, *saying*, Harken to the sound of the trumpet. But they said, We will not hearken.

18 Therefore hear, ye nations, and know, O congregation, what *is* among them. **19** "Hear, O earth: behold, I will bring evil upon this people, *even* "the fruit of their thoughts, because they have not hearkened unto my words, nor to my law, but rejected it. **20** "To what purpose cometh there to me incense "from Sheba, and the sweet cane

from a far country? "your burnt offerings *are* not acceptable, nor your sacrifices sweet unto me. **21** Therefore thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will lay stumblingblocks before this people, and the fathers and the sons together shall fall upon them; the neighbour and his friend shall perish. **22** Thus saith the LORD, Behold, a people cometh from the "north country, and a great nation shall be raised from the sides of the earth. **23** They shall lay hold on bow and spear; they *are* cruel, and have no mercy; their voice "roareth like the sea; and they ride upon horses, set in array as men for war against thee, O daughter of Zion. **24** We have heard the fame thereof: our hands wax feeble: "anguish hath taken hold of us, *and* pain, as of a

s Isa. 8. 20; chap. 18. 15; Mal. 4. 4; Luke 16. 29.—t Matt. 11. 29.—u Isa. 21. 11; 58. 1; chap. 25. 4; Ezek. 3. 17; Hab. 2. 1.—v Isa. 1. 2.—w Prov. 1. 31.—x Psal. 40. 6; 50. 7, 8, 9; Isa. 1.

11; 66. 3; Amos 5. 21; Micah 6. 6, etc.—y Isa. 60. 6.—z Chap. 7. 21.—a Chap. 1. 15; 5. 15; 10. 22; 50. 41, 42, 43.—b Isa. 5. 30.—c Chap. 4. 31; 13. 21; 49. 24; 50. 43.

put to shame because they have done abomination, yet they take not shame to themselves," etc.

JUSTIFICATION OF THEIR OVERTHROW IN THEIR STUBBORN RESISTANCE, 16-21.

16. Ask for the old paths—The one remedy for all apostasy—call back the old times. In what path did your holy and heroic fathers walk? Go back where the ways meet, and again enter those everlasting paths.

18, 19. God makes appeal to three witnesses—the **nations**, the **congregation**, the **earth**. As his own people had turned away alike from his commands and entreaties, he now calls upon the "nations." The word "congregation" is here used in a universal sense, but one of great impressiveness and solemnity. Instead of confining the term, as is most common, to the assembly of the faithful, God now applies it to the totality of the heathen world. He speaks as the God of the universe to all the men who dwell upon the face of the earth, and justifies his ways with his own people by an appeal to the universal conscience. And finally, as the climax of this appeal, "earth" is mentioned as embracing not only the men who now live, but all who have lived or shall live.

20. To what purpose, etc.—"It is remarkable that this rejection of ritual

observances is made by the two prophets (Isaiah and Jeremiah) who chiefly assisted the two pious kings (Hezekiah and Josiah) in restoring the temple service. God rejects not the ceremonial service, but the substitution of it for personal holiness and morality. If it be the expression of love and piety present in the heart, it is the beauty of holiness; if it take the place of love and duty, it is an abomination."—DEAN SMITH, *in loc*.

21. I will lay stumblingblocks—God does this in two ways, neither of which is any impeachment of his holiness. First, by the general action of moral law by which sin reacts upon the nature of the sinner; and, second, by outward visitations in the realm of physical nature or human society. To these last there is here special reference.

GREATNESS OF THE CALAMITY, 22-30.

22. The north country—Babylonia. **Sides of the earth**—Rather, *ends*; most distant regions. As the enemy comes from these, so the captivity will be to these. (Chap. xxxi, 8.)

23. Spear—Rather, *javelin*. These bows and javelins are abundantly illustrated in the Assyrian monuments. And these monuments fully justify the epithet **cruel**, as applied to these peoples.

woman in travail. **25** Go not forth into the field, nor walk by the way; for the sword of the enemy and fear is on every side.

26 O daughter of my people, ^dgird thee with sackcloth, ^eand wallow thyself in ashes; ^fmake thee mourning, as for an only son, most bitter lamentation: for the spoiler shall suddenly come upon us.

27 I have set thee for a tower and ^aa fortress among my people, that thou mayest know and try their way.

^d Chap. 4. 8. — ^e Chap. 25. 34; Micah 1. 10. — ^f Zech. 12. 10. — ^a Chap. 1. 18; 15. 20. — ^h Chap.

26. Wallow thyself in ashes—Rather, *Besprinkle with* ashes, as an expression of abandonment to sorrow. There is cause for mourning as for an only son. The destruction is utter.

27. A tower and a fortress—The rendering here is clearly indefensible. The word rendered "tower" is an active verbal noun from a root which means "to inspect closely," and may perhaps be best rendered as *tester* or *trier*—that is, of metals. The word rendered "fortress" is more doubtful. Some (Gesenius, Keil, Noyes) accept this sense, and translate, "*For a trier have I set thee among my people as a strong tower.*" Others (as Fürst and Nägelsbach) take the word in the sense of *ore*. There is no other example of this sense for this word in the Old Testament, but it comes legitimately from the root-meaning, namely, *to cut off*, hence that which is cut off—the *ore*. The rendering then would be, "*I have set thee among my people as a tester of ore,*" or, more expressly, after Nägelsbach, "*I have set thee as a trier among my people—the ore.*"

28. The reasons: The people are **revoltors, walking with slanderers... brass and iron** (ignoble)... **corrupters.**

29. The lead is consumed, etc.—There is an uncertainty here as to the original text, and this has given rise to various renderings. That of the Authorized Version expresses the sense that the process is continued until the very lead used as a flux is consumed, and yet no silver is found. Keil translates, "*Burned are the bellows by the fire; at an end is the lead; in vain they melt and melt; and wicked*

28 ^bThey are all grievous revoltors, ⁱwalking with slanders: *they are* ^kbrass and iron; they are all corrupters. **29** The bellows are burned, the lead is consumed of the fire; the founder melteth in vain: for the wicked are not plucked away. **30** ^lReprobate silver shall *men* call them, because the Lord hath rejected them.

CHAPTER VII.

THE word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying, **2** ^aStand

5. 23. — ⁱ Chap. 9. 4. — ^k Ezek. 22. 18. — ^l Isa. 1. 22. — ^b Or, *Refuse silver.* — ^a Chap. 26. 2.

ones are not separated." Nägelsbach, "*The bellows glows; out of its fire comes—lead! in vain one melts and melts; the base are not separated.*" Of these the translation of Keil is to be preferred, though, in one place, it overrides the Masoretic accents, and, in another, breaks up one word of the Kethib into two.

CHAPTER VII.

The following four chapters must be taken together. If they do not contain the very words uttered by Jeremiah on some particular occasion, they must be regarded as made up from the discourses he was accustomed to deliver at this time, and hence as representing, even to the language, his teachings. For the historical setting of this passage, turn to the twenty-sixth chapter. Jehoiakim had been established on the throne by the king of Egypt in the place of his younger brother, Jehoahaz, who had been preferred by the people, probably because Jehoiakim belonged to the party who favoured alliance with Egypt. All hope of the success and perpetuity of Josiah's reformation had passed away. Hence the great object of the discourse was to work in the people conviction of their sin and their danger, and, if possible, to lead them back, through penitence and humiliation, unto their old faith. The most offensive portion of Jeremiah's address consisted in his reference to the ruins of Shiloh, and his intimation that even Jerusalem, the sanctuary of the Most High, might experience a similar fate. As we learn from the twenty-sixth chapter, Jeremiah would have paid

in the gate of the Lord's house, and proclaim there this word, and say, Hear the word of the Lord, all ye of Judah, that enter in at these gates to worship the Lord. **3** Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, ^b Amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place. **4** ^c Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, are these. **5** For if ye thoroughly amend your ways and your doings; if ye thoroughly ^d execute judgment between a man and his neighbour; **6** ^e If ye oppress not the stranger,

^b Chap. 18. 11; 26. 13.—^c Micah 3. 11.—^d Chap. 22. 3.—^e Deut. 6. 14, 15; 8. 19; 11. 28; chap. 13. 10.—^f Deut. 4. 40.—^g Chap. 3. 18.—^h Verse 4.—ⁱ Chap. 5. 31; 14. 13, 14.

the fatherless, and the widow, and shed not innocent blood in this place, ^a neither walk after other gods to your hurt; **7** ^a Then will I cause you to dwell in this place, in ^a the land that I gave to your fathers, for ever and ever.

8 Behold, ^b ye trust in ^b lying words, that cannot profit. **9** ^c Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Baal, and ^d walk after other gods whom ye know not; **10** ^e And come and stand before me in this house, ^f which is called by my name, and say, We are delivered to do all these abominations? **11** Is ^g this

^a 1 Kings 18. 21; Hosea 4. 1, 2; Zeph. 1. 5.—^b Exod. 20. 3; verse 6.—^c Ezek. 23. 39.—^d 1 Heb. *whereupon my name is called*.—^e Verses 11, 14, 30; chap. 32. 34; 34. 15.—^f Isa. 56. 7.

for his fidelity with his life had it not been for influential friends.

The discourse falls into three leading divisions:

1. The Temple and its Worship no Adequate Ground of Confidence, vii, 1-viii, 3.

2. The Growing Wickedness of the Leaders and Teachers, viii, 4-ix, 24.

3. The Means of Escape, ix, 25-x, 25.

1. The Temple and its Worship no Adequate Ground of Confidence.

CHAPTERS vii, 1-viii, 3.

VANITY OF TRUSTING IN THE TEMPLE, 1-16.

2. Gate of the Lord's house—Comp. xxxvi, 10. Probably one of the three gates to the inner court. **All...Judah**—Probably spoken on the occasion of one of the annual feasts.

3. Amend your ways and your doings—Habits and particular acts.

4. Lying words—Words of deception, misleading them as to their confidence. The error consisted in assuming as fact, that because Jerusalem contained the temple of the Lord that she stood in no danger of punishment from her apostasy and wickedness. That was a sort of national fetishism, such as has had many illustrations in history. The threefold repetition of the phrase "temple of the Lord" serves to indicate the fulness and emphasis

of their confidence. **These**—Probably alluding to the halls, courts, and various structures of the sanctuary.

5, 6. If ye thoroughly amend, etc.—If you shall, in experience and character, join yourself to the Almighty—if you shall become his spiritual habitation, and thus be endowed with the wealth of his attributes—then will you be safe in a sense in which no material thing, not even the temple of Jehovah, could make you so. The conditions which are here specified are doubtless suggestive of the crimes which prevailed among them. One of these is, the **not shedding innocent blood**; showing that the bloody rites of Moloch were practised among the people.

9, 10. Will ye steal...and burn incense unto Baal—The precise thought of this notable passage is obscured, if not, indeed, materially changed, in the Authorized Version. It is not the plea of the fatalist, but of the ritualist, which is here reproved. Their sin and blasphemy consisted in setting religious services over against the grossest immoralities in their lives, so that, though doing **all these abominations**, they claimed to be **delivered**—that is, freed from all the consequences—by *coming and standing before God in his house*. It was not the first instance—and, alas! not the last—in which the "worship of the body" has been supposed to atone for the sins of the soul.

house, which is called by my name, become a ^pden of robbers in your eyes? Behold, even I have seen *it*, saith the Lord. **12** But go ye now unto ^qmy place which was in Shiloh, ^rwhere I set my name at the first, and see ^swhat I did to it for the wickedness of my people Israel. **13** And now, because ye have done all these works, saith the Lord, and I spake unto you, ^trising up early and speaking, but ye heard not; and I ^ucalled you, but ye answered not; **14** Therefore will I do unto *this* house, which is called by my name, wherein ye trust, and unto the place which I gave to you and to your fathers, as I have done to ^vShiloh. **15** And I will cast you out of my sight, ^was I have cast out all your brethren, ^xeven the whole seed of Ephraim. **16** Therefore ^ypray not thou for this people, neither lift up cry nor prayer for them, neither make intercession to me: ^zfor I will not hear thee.

^p Matt. 21. 13; Mark 11. 17; Luke 19. 46.—^q Josh. 18. 1; Judg. 18. 31.—^r Deut. 12. 11.—^s 1 Sam. 4. 10, 11; Psal. 78. 60; chap. 26. 6.—^t 2 Chron. 36. 15; ver. 25; chap. 11. 7.—^u Prov. 1. 24; Isa. 65. 12; 66. 4.—^v 1 Sam. 4. 10, 11; Psal. 78. 60; chap. 26. 6.—^w 2 Kings 17. 23.

11. Den of robbers—In that limestone country, where caves abound, and where robbery has ever been the business of multitudes, this phrase had a force and expressiveness which we imperfectly feel; and hence the contrast with the glorious house of God is a startling one.

12. Unto my place... in Shiloh—Shiloh, north of Jerusalem, was the place where the ark of the covenant was kept for a long period, and so was a sort of predecessor to Jerusalem as a place of the divine presence. There were, perhaps, in Shiloh permanent buildings for sanctuary purposes, though the holy ark itself abode in a tabernacle. To the ruins of these the prophet alludes, virtually saying, It is possible for even a sanctuary of Jehovah to be destroyed, as witness Shiloh.

13. Rising up early—Showing deep and tender interest, in that he speaks from early morning onward.

14. Will I do unto this house—It was after this passage, as we learn from the twenty-sixth chapter, that the priests, the prophets, and the people took Jeremiah and said, "Thou shalt

17 Seest thou not what they do in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem? **18** ^aThe children gather wood, and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead *their* dough, to make cakes to the ^bqueen of heaven, and to ^cpour out drink offerings unto other gods, that they may provoke me to anger. **19** ^dDo they provoke me to anger? saith the Lord: *do they not provoke themselves to the confusion of their own faces?* **20** Therefore thus saith the Lord God; Behold, mine anger and my fury shall be poured out upon this place, upon man, and upon beast, and upon the trees of the field, and upon the fruit of the ground; and it shall burn, and shall not be quenched.

21 Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; ^ePut your burnt offerings unto your sacrifices, and eat flesh. **22** ^fFor I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I

^a Psal. 78. 67, 68.—^b Exod. 32. 10; chap. 11. 14; 14. 11.—^c Chap. 15. 1.—^d Chap. 44. 17, 19.—^e 2 Or. *frame, or, workmanship of heaven*.—^f Chap. 19. 13.—^g Deut. 32. 16, 21.—^h Isa. 1. 11; chap. 6. 20; Amos 5. 21; see Hosea 8. 13.—ⁱ 1 Sam. 15. 22; Psal. 51. 16, 17; Hosea 6. 6.

surely die." But the man of God, strong in his consciousness of being united to Jehovah, spoke such clear, bold words in his own vindication that they could not compass his ruin. History furnishes few examples of courage so intrepid and words so forceful as those of this weeping prophet on this occasion.

THEIR WORSHIP OF JEHOVAH HYPOCRITICAL, BEING JOINED WITH IDOLATRY, 17-28.

18. Children... fathers... women—All classes unite. The family in its organic unity does the work of irreligion. The very fountains of human life are poisoned, so that even the children are busied in these hellish rites. **Queen of heaven**—An Assyrian goddess representing the productive principle of nature, whose rites were oftentimes most unclean and infamous. (See also chap. xliv. 7.)

22. For I spake not—The evidence which some have found in this passage of the late origin of the ceremonial portions of the Pentateuch, is of no value whatever: the many allusions in this book and the earlier

brought them out of the land of Egypt, ³ concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices: **23** But this thing commanded I them, saying, 'Obey my voice, and ⁴ I will be your God, and ye shall be my people: and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you. **24** ⁵ But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear, but ⁶ walked in the counsels and in the ⁷ imagination of their evil heart, and ⁸ went backward, and not forward. **25** Since the day that your fathers came forth out of the land of Egypt unto this day, I have even ⁹ sent unto you all my servants the prophets, ¹⁰ daily rising up early and sending them: **26** ¹¹ Yet they hearkened not unto me, nor inclined their ear, but ¹² hardened their neck: ¹³ they did worse

³ Heb. *concerning the matter of*.—*f* Exod. 15. 26; Deut. 6. 3; chap. 11. 4, 7.—*g* Exod. 19. 5; Lev. 26. 12.—*h* Psalm 81. 11; chap. 11. 8.—*i* Deut. 29. 19; Psa. 81. 12.—*4* Or, *stubbornness*.—*5* Heb. *were*.—*k* Chap. 2. 27; 32. 33; Hosea 4. 16.—*l* 2 Chron. 36. 15; chap. 25. 4; 29. 19.—*m* Ver. 13.—*n* Ver. 24; chap. 11. 8; 17. 23; 25. 3, 4.

prophetical books to the ceremonial law refute that idea. The prophet speaks not absolutely, but relatively; relatively, as to time and importance. God spake not so early, nor so emphatically, as to sacrifices, as he did respecting obedience to his spiritual law.

24. Went backward—Literally, *were backward*. That is, they turned the back and not the face.

25. Since the day, etc.—From the first, God had been seeking to enforce that one great lesson of obedience and submission. Every prophet had come on that errand. Every priest had been consecrated to that work. Every ritual observance had this for its deep and significant lesson.

27. Thou shalt speak, etc.—The exact truth is, though thou speakest they will not hearken.

28. Truth is perished—Better, *faithfulness is perished*. That is, truth in character, not objective truth.

JEHOVAH'S REJECTION OF THE NATION, 29-34.

29. Hair—Here spoken of as a crown, the literal meaning of the original being *diadem*. See Num. vi. 7. English Version, "consecration." The word was originally applied to the diadem of the high priest, (Exod. xxix,

than their fathers. **27** Therefore 'thou shalt speak all these words unto them; but they will not hearken to thee: thou shalt also call unto them; but they will not answer thee. **28** But thou shalt say unto them, This is a nation that obeyeth not the voice of the Lord their God, nor receiveth ⁶ correction: ⁷ truth is perished, and is cut off from their mouth.

29 'Cut off thine hair, O Jerusalem, and cast it away, and take up a lamentation on high places; for the Lord hath rejected and forsaken the generation of his wrath. **30** For the children of Judah have done evil in my sight, saith the Lord: ⁸ they have set their abominations in the house which is called by my name, to pollute it. **31** And they have built the ⁹ high places of To-

o Neh. 9. 17, 29; chap. 19. 15.—*p* Chap. 16. 12.—*q* Ezek. 2. 7.—*r* Chap. 5. 3; 32. 33.—*6* Or, *instruction*.—*s* Chap. 9. 8.—*t* Job 1. 20; Isa. 15. 2; chap. 16. 6; 48. 37; Micah 1. 16.—*u* 2 Kings 21. 4, 7; 2 Chron. 33. 4, 5, 7; chap. 23. 11; 32. 34; Ezek. 7. 20; 8. 5, 6, etc.; Dan. 9. 27.—*v* 2 Kings 23. 10; chap. 19. 5; 32. 35.

6.) and, as Keil thinks, was transferred to the hair because the uncut hair of the Nazarite was the mark of his consecration to the Lord, expressing what the diadem of the high priest expressed. As the defiled Nazarite should cut off the hair of his head because it had ceased to be a symbol of his peculiar and intimate relation to God, so Jerusalem is called upon to shear off her hair for the same reason. No longer is she the consecrated of the Lord. She has become defiled; hence cast off and abandoned.

30. Have set their abominations in the house... called by my name—Probably alluding to the profanation of the temple by Manasseh. 2 Kings xxi. 5, 7.

31. High places of Tophet—The word for "high places" is not the same which has been repeatedly so translated in this book, as in verse 29, but rather *high altars*. It applies to those artificial shrines raised for Baal worship at Jerusalem. Some have thought that the word "Tophet" is to be used here not as a proper noun, but an epithet—*abomination*. But the reasons given are not conclusive. It is better to regard it here, as elsewhere, as simply the name for a definite locality. For the genesis of the

phet, which *is* in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to ^w burn their sons and their daughters in the fire; ^x which I commanded *them* not, neither ^y came it into my heart.

32 Therefore, behold, ^y the days come, saith the LORD, that it shall no more be called Tophet, nor The valley of the son of Hinnom, but The valley of slaughter: ^z for they shall bury in Tophet, till there be no place. **33** And the ^a carcasses of this people shall be meat for the fowls of the heaven, and for the beasts of the earth; and none shall fray *them* away.

34 Then will I cause to ^b cease from the cities of Judah, and from the streets of Jerusalem, the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride: for the ^c land shall be desolate.

CHAPTER VIII.

AT that time, saith the LORD, they

w Psa. 106. 33.—*x* See Deut. 17. 3.—*y* Heb. *came it upon my heart*.—*z* Chap. 19. 6.—*a* 2 Kings 23. 10; chap. 19. 11; Ezek. 6. 5.—*b* Deut. 28. 26; Psa. 79. 2; chap. 12. 9; 16. 4; 34. 20.—*c* Isa. 24. 7, 8; chap. 16. 9; 23. 10; 33. 11;

word, see the dictionaries. **Valley of the son of Hinnom**—The origin of this designation is not known. Probably it came from some ancient hero of whose exploits this name is the only memorial. It is first used in the book of Joshua. **To burn their sons and their daughters**—See chap. xix. 6; xxxii. 35; Lev. xviii. 21; xx. 2-5; and Ezek. xvi. 20, 21. This burning was literal, though, as would appear from Ezekiel, the victims were slain before being burned. They "caused their children to pass through the fire" in order to purify them and fit them for eternal bliss.

32. Valley of slaughter—Where they sinned they shall die. Where they slaughtered their own children, in blasphemous and cruel idolatry, shall they be slaughtered. This slaughter shall be so fearful that the dead shall remain unburied, and the solitude and desolation shall be so perfect that not even shall the passers by scare away the vultures from the carcasses.

34. Cause to cease...the voice of mirth—Gloom and desolation shall cover the land. The joyfulness of life shall be gone. It shall be a dread carnival of death!

shall bring out the bones of the kings of Judah, and the bones of his princes, and the bones of the priests, and the bones of the prophets, and the bones of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, out of their graves: **2** And they shall spread them before the sun, and the moon, and all the host of heaven, whom they have loved, and whom they have served, and after whom they have walked, and whom they have sought, and ^a whom they have worshipped: they shall not be gathered, ^b nor be buried; they shall be for ^c dung upon the face of the earth. **3** And ^d death shall be chosen rather than life by all the residue of them that remain of this evil family, which remain in all the places whither I have driven them, saith the LORD of hosts.

4 Moreover thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the LORD: Shall they fall, and not arise? shall he turn away, and

Ezek. 26. 13; Hosea 2. 11; Rev. 18. 23.—*e* Lev. 26. 33; Isa. 1. 7; 3. 26.—*d* 2 Kings 23. 5; Ezek. 8. 16.—*e* Chap. 23. 19.—*f* 2 Kings 9. 36; Psa. 83. 10; chap. 9. 32; 16. 4.—*g* Job 3. 21, 22; 7. 15, 16; Rev. 9. 6.

CHAPTER VIII.

RETRIBUTION, 1-3.

1. They shall bring out the bones—Thus to complete the dreadful picture. Even the grave is not a safe covert from the avenging justice of God. The victorious enemy shall violate the sanctuaries of the dead in their search for plunder, or to express their hatred and contempt.

2. They shall spread them before the sun, etc.—Observe the cumulative force of the verbs used to express their worship of the heavenly bodies. The passage is an excellent illustration of the genius of the Hebrew language as to emphasis. But the stars looked coldly down on the discomfiture of their worshippers.

3. Death shall be chosen—The fate of the survivors is most pitiable of all, for they prefer death but do not find it.

2. The Growing Wickedness of the Leaders and Teachers.

CHAPTERS viii, 4-ix, 24.

IMPENITENCE AND PUNISHMENT, 4-12.

4. Shall they fall, etc.—Better, *Do men fall and not rise?* etc., the expres-

not return? **5** Why *then* is this people of Jerusalem *slidden back* by a perpetual backsliding? *'they hold fast deceit, 'they refuse to return.* **6** *I hearkened and heard, but they spake not aright: no man repented him of his wickedness, saying, What have I done? every one turned to his course, as the horse rusheth into the battle.* **7** Yea, *the stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times; and 'the turtle and the crane and the swallow observe the time of their coming; but 'my people know not the judgment of the LORD.* **8** How do ye say, *We are wise, 'and the law of the LORD is with us? Lo, certainly 'in vain made he it; the pen of the scribes is in vain.* **9** *2^a The wise men are ashamed, they are dismayed and taken: lo, they have rejected the word of the LORD; and*

'what wisdom is in them? 10 Therefore 'will I give their wives unto others, and their fields to them that shall inherit them: for every one from the least even unto the greatest is given to 'covetousness, from the prophet even unto the priest every one dealeth falsely. 11 For they have 'healed the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, 'Peace, peace; when there is no peace. 12 Were they 'ashamed when they had committed abomination? nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush; therefore shall they fall among them that fall: in the time of their visitation they shall be cast down, saith the LORD.

13 *4 I will surely consume them, saith the LORD: there shall be no grapes 'on the vine, nor figs on the 'fig tree, and*

e Chap. 7. 24.—f Chap. 9. 6.—g Chap. 5. 3.—h 2 Pet. 3. 9.—i Isa. 1. 3.—k Cant. 2. 12.—l Chap. 5. 4, 5.—m Rom. 2. 17.—1 Or, the fulke pen of the scribes worketh for falsehood, Isa. 10. 1.—2 Or, Have they been ashamed, etc.—n Chap. 6. 15.—3 Heb. the

wisdom of what thing.—o Deut. 28. 30; chap. 6. 12; Amos 5. 11; Zeph. 1. 13.—p Isa. 56. 11; chap. 6. 13.—q Chap. 6. 14.—r Ezek. 13. 10.—s Chap. 3. 3; 6. 15.—4 Or, In gathering I will consume.—t Isa. 5. 1, etc.; Joel 1. 7.—u Matt. 21. 19; Luke 13. 6, etc.

sion being impersonal. If men fall, they do not continue lying on the ground. If a man loses his way, he does not persist in going on, but turns about to retrace his steps. Here commences the second division of this discourse, in which the prophet sets forth the obstinacy of the people in wickedness and the fearfulness of their judgment.

5. Why then, etc.—And so constitute such a sad anomaly.

6. I hearkened—The person speaking is Jehovah, who listens, not with the cold ear of a sovereign and judge, but with deep and eager solicitude as a father. **As the horse rusheth**—Literally, *overfloweth*; as the torrent leaps over or bears away all obstructions. The mad impetuosity of the war horse is the point of comparison.

7. Yea, the stork . . . knoweth, etc.—Even the birds obey the law of God written on their natures, but my people are more brutish than the irrational animals themselves.

8. The pen of the scribes is in vain—The latter part of this verse should be translated, *certainly the lying pen of the scribes hath made it a lie.* The prophet would call them back from their boastfulness in the possession of the written law, and declares

that the corruption is so universal that even this has become so overlaid with falsehood as to become a lie. In this he alludes to the office of scribes and priests, as expositors, standing between God's law and the people, and "perverting the ways of God," "making void his commandments." That of which Christ complained had already begun in Jeremiah's time.

9. Rejected the word of the Lord—"If the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!"

10-12. Were they ashamed—Identical with chap. vi, 12-15, but with such differences as to vindicate the passage from the charge of being interpolated here. It is an instance of Jeremiah's tendency to repeat himself. For a list of these repetitions, see Introduction, p. 286.

THE HORRORS OF THE VISITATION, 13-17.

13. There shall be no grapes—The italic words in the Authorized Version, as is indeed often the case, pervert the sense. The middle portion of the verse is not a threat, but a descriptive statement. The whole verse may be rendered: *I will utterly sweep them away, (literally, I will gather, I will sweep,) saith Jehovah; there are no grapes*.

the leaf shall fade; and the things that I have given them shall pass away from them. **14** Why do we sit still? ^v assemble yourselves, and let us enter into the defenced cities, and let us be silent there: for the LORD our God hath put us to silence, and given us ^w water of ^e gall to drink, because we have sinned against the LORD. **15** We ^x looked for peace, but no good came; and for a time of health, and behold trouble! **16** The snorting of his horses was heard from ^y Dan: the whole land trembled at the sound of the neighing of his ^z strong ones; for they are come, and have devoured the land, and ^a all that is in it; the city, and those that dwell therein. **17** For, behold, I will send serpents, cockatrices, among you, which will not

^v Chap. 4. 5.—^w Chap. 9. 15; 23. 15.—⁵ Or, *poison*.—^x Chap. 14. 19.—^y Chap. 4. 15.—^z Judg. 5. 22; chap. 47. 3.—^a Heb. *the fullness thereof*.—^u Psa. 58. 4, 5; Eccles. 10. 11.—⁷ Heb. *upon*.

on the vines, and no figs on the fig tree, and the leaf is withered. So I will appoint unto them those that shall pass over them.

14. Let us be silent, etc.—Better, *let us perish*, for Jehovah our God hath caused us to perish. **Gall**—The name of a poisonous plant which cannot be unmistakably identified. From the fact that it is mentioned in Deut. xxxii, 32, as having berries, some have not improbably conjectured that the nightshade is intended.

16, 17. From Dan—The northern boundary of the land, and hence the place where the alarm of an enemy coming from the north would first be given. **Strong ones**—War horses. See chap. iv, 13, 29, etc. **Cockatrices**—Basilisks. From Isa. lix, 5, we learn that they were oviparous, and from Isa. xi, 8, that they were subterranean in habit. It would also appear from this and other passages that they were incapable of being charmed. Eccles. x, 11; Psa. lviii, 45.

CAPTIVITY AND SORROW, 18–22.

18. When I would comfort, etc.—The original for “comfort” is a noun used vocatively, and occurs only here. Hence, the rendering should be, *O my comfort in sorrow, my heart grows sick in me*.

be ^a charmed, and they shall bite you, saith the LORD.

18 When I would comfort myself against sorrow, my heart is faint ^b in me.

19 Behold the voice of the cry of the daughter of my people ^c because of them that dwell in ^d a far country: Is not the LORD in Zion? is not her king in her? Why have they ^e provoked me to anger with their graven images, and with strange vanities? **20** The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved. **21** ^f For the hurt of the daughter of my people am I hurt; I am ^g black; astonishment hath taken hold on me. **22** Is there no ^h balm in Gilead? is there no physician there? why then is not the health of the daughter of my people ⁱ recovered?

⁸ Heb. *because of the country of them that are far off*.—^b Isa. 39. 3.—^c Deut. 32. 1; Isa. 1. 4.—^d Chap. 4. 19; 9. 1; 14. 17.—^e Joel 2. 6; Nah. 2. 10.—^f Gen. 37. 25; 43. 11; chap. 46. 11; 51. 8.—⁹ Heb. *gone up*.

19. Because of them that dwell in a far country—Rather, *from out of a far country*, namely, the land of their captivity. The words which follow are spoken by the exiled Jews.

20. Harvest...summer—The “harvest” is the time for the ingathering of the grain; the “summer” for the ingathering of the fruits. When both are past all hope is gone. This is the language of utter despair.

21. Am I hurt—Thus does the prophet identify himself with his people in their humiliation. The language here is highly emotional; the short, nervous sentences marking the warm feeling of the writer as more diffuse words could not.

22. Balm in Gilead—One of the precious productions of Palestine. See Gen. xliii, 11; Jer. xlvi, 11; li, 8, etc., etc. **There**—Where the medicine is, there should be the skill for its use. Israel's “priests and prophets were the physicians whose office it was to teach the remedy for human sin and woe. Has Israel then no balm for herself? Is there no physician in her who can bind up her wound?”—*Speaker's Commentary*. **Health...recovered**—Keil translates, *why, then, is no plaster laid on the daughter of my people?* But Fürst and Nägelsbach support the common Version.

CHAPTER IX.

OH¹ that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people! **2** Oh that I had in the wilderness a lodging place of wayfaring men; that I might leave my people, and go from them! for ^bthey be all adulterers, an assembly of treacherous men. **3** And ^cthey bend their tongues like their bow for lies: but they are not valiant for the truth upon the earth; for they proceed from evil to evil, and they ^dknow not me, saith the LORD. **4** ^eTake ye heed every one of his ²neighbour, and trust ye not in any brother: for every brother will utterly supplant, and every neighbour will ^fwalk

¹ Heb. *Who will give my head, etc.*—^a Isa. 22. 4; chap. 4. 19; 13. 17; 14. 17; Lam. 2. 11; 3. 48.
^b Chap. 5. 7, 8.—^c Psa. 64. 3; Isa. 59. 4, 13, 15.
^d 1 Sam. 2. 12; Hosea 4. 1.—^e Chap. 12. 6; Micah 7. 5, 6.—² Or, *friend*.

CHAPTER IX.

PREVAILING DECEIT AND WICKEDNESS, 1-8.

1. Mine eyes a fountain of tears—This verse should go with the preceding chapter, as indeed it does in the Hebrew. We see in its pathetic words, as in a mirror, the heart of him who has been denominated, and not unaptly, the Weeping Prophet. Comp. Lam. ii, 11, and iii, 48.

2. From his own sorrows the prophet now turns to the people's sins. He sighs for solitude rather than contact with the prevailing wickedness. Similarly has a modern poet spoken in a passage which is not merely an imitation, but almost a literal translation of this:

O for a lodge in some vast wilderness,
 Some boundless contiguity of shade,
 Where rumour of oppression and deceit,
 Of unsuccessful or successful war,
 Might never reach me more!—*Churper*.

Wilderness—An uninhabited place away from the homes and haunts of men. **Lodging place**—Caravansary. They were created on the route of caravans for their accommodation. They were often a mere enclosure, lonely and filthy, but preferred by the prophet to a dwelling among a corrupt people. **An assembly**—This word here has some suggestion of disparagement, like *gang* or *crew*.

with slanders. **5** And they will ³deceive every one his neighbour, and will not speak the truth: they have taught their tongue to speak lies, and weary themselves to commit iniquity. **6** Their habitation *is* in the midst of deceit; through deceit they refuse to know me, saith the LORD. **7** Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, Behold, ⁴I will melt them, and try them; ⁵for how shall I do for the daughter of my people? **8** Their tongue *is* as an arrow shot out; it speaketh ¹deceit: *one* speaketh ²peaceably to his neighbour with his mouth, but ⁴in heart he layeth ⁵his wait.

9 Shall I not visit them for these things? saith the LORD: shall not my

^f Chap. 6. 28.—³ Or, *mock*.—^g Isa. 1. 25; Mal. 3. 3.—^h Hos. 11. 8.—ⁱ Psa. 12. 2; 120. 3; verse 3.—^k Psa. 23. 3; 55. 21.—⁴ Heb. *in the midst of him*.—⁵ Or, *wait for him*.—^l Chap. 5. 9, 29.

3. Tongues like their bow—Ready to shoot out lies. **Not valiant for the truth**—This grand phrase is not defensible as a translation in this place. The precise thought is, *They do not bear sway in faithfulness*; that is, they gain their influence by treachery and deceit. **Upon the earth**—Rather, *in the land*, namely, Judea.

4-6. Every brother will utterly supplant, etc.—A terrible indictment! Just in the ratio in which truth is put down must the bonds of mutual confidence be relaxed. Such a state of things brought forward to its full result and made permanent, would be hell! No material flames would be needed. The fires of universal enmity and distrust would burn to the very core of the soul.

7. I will melt them... try them—Even their punishment is not simply retributive, but rather, corrective. *God punishes for their sake and not for his own*. He puts them into the crucible, not to torture, but to purify. **How shall I do, etc.**—That is, how else can I do? Is there any other course for me to take? Other and milder measures have failed, this alone remains.

8. An arrow shot out—This is founded on the Keri of the Masorites. But the English text, *a murderous arrow*, is better.

soul be avenged on such a nation as this?

10 For the mountains will I take up a weeping and wailing, and ^mfor the ^ehabitations of the wilderness a lamentation, because they are ^rburned up, so that none can pass through *them*; neither can *men* hear the voice of the cattle: ^sboth the fowl of the heavens and the beast are fled; they are gone. **11** And I will make Jerusalem ^eheaps, and ^pa den of dragons; and I will make the cities of Judah ^edesolate, without an inhabitant.

12 ^aWho is the wise man, that may understand this? and *who is he* to whom the mouth of the LORD hath spoken, that he may declare it, for what the land perisheth and is burned up like a wilderness, that none passeth through?

13 And the LORD saith, Because they have forsaken my law which I set before

m Chap. 12. 4; 23. 10; Hos. 4. 3.—6 Or, *pastures*.—7 Or, *desolate*.—8 Heb. *from the fowls* even to, etc.—*n* Chap. 4. 25.—*o* Isa. 25. 2.—*p* Isa. 13. 22; 34. 13; chap. 10. 22.—9 Heb. *desolation*.—*q* Psa. 107. 43; 110s. 14. 9.—*r* Chap. 3. 17; 7. 24.

THE DESOLATION OF THE LAND AND THE DISPERSION OF THE PEOPLE, 9-15.

10. The whole passage to the twenty-second verse is devoted to setting forth in detail the punishment which is about to come upon the land and the people. **For the mountains**—Once cultivated and fruitful, and covered with happy flocks, but now desolate. **For the habitations**—Namely, of the shepherds, who pitch their tents or construct their booths wherever is pasture for their flocks. But these pastures are to be **burned up**, so that there will be no life left.

11. **Dragons**—Rather, *jackals*. Fittingly associated with the ruinous stone **heaps of Jerusalem**.

12. **For what the land perisheth**—This is the question which is proposed for the consideration of the wise men, and should stand out: *Wherefore doth the land come to ruin?*

13. **Because they have forsaken my law**—Thus far the challenge to attention: now follows the formal and fearful statement of the people's sin and misery. They had openly and wilfully and persistently disobeyed the laws of Jehovah. They had deliberately prostituted themselves to the service of Baalim, (see chap. ii, 8, 23),

and have not obeyed my voice, neither walked therein; **14** But have ^rwalked after the ^oimagination of their own heart, and after Baalim, ^ewhich their fathers taught them: **15** Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will ^rfeed them, *even* this people, ^uwith worm-wood, and give them water of gall to drink. **16** I will ^rscatter them also among the heathen, whom neither they nor their fathers have known: ^uand I will send a sword after them, till I have consumed them.

17 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, Consider ye, and call for ^sthe mourning women, that they may come; and send for cunning *women*, that they may come: **18** And let them make haste, and take up a wailing for us, that ^rour eyes may run down with tears, and our

10 Or, *stubble*hness.—*s* Gal. 1. 14.—*t* Psa. 80. 5.—*u* Chap. 8. 14; 23. 15; Lam. 2. 15, 19.—*v* Lev. 26. 33; Deut. 28. 64.—*w* Lev. 26. 33; chap. 44. 27; Ezek. 5. 2, 12.—*x* 2 Chron. 35. 25; Job 3. 8; Eccles. 12. 5; Amos 5. 16; Matt. 9. 23.—*y* Chap. 14. 17.

and hence the penalty threatened in the law (Leviticus xxvi, 33) will be inflicted.

THE CARNIVAL OF DEATH, 16-21.

16. **I will scatter them**—God's determination thus to do is rendered more appalling by the statement, **whom neither they nor their fathers have known. Till I have consumed them**—Not utterly, as is repeatedly indicated in this book: God's forbearance still continuing to the remnant who should be spared a feeble life in their own land.

17-20. **Consider ye, and call**—To heighten the poetical effect of this passage Jehovah calls for the **mourning women**; those women who among the Orientals are hired to make lamentation, because "skilled in the arts of woe," and so here called **cunning**. (See Miss ROGERS'S *Domestic Life in Palestine*, pp. 181-184, for a very vivid picture of these mourning ceremonies at the present time.) Here every impressive feature of such a picture is blended: the office of the women themselves, their character, their words, the effect of their lamentations, and finally their fewness as compared with the greatness of the woe, so that they are called upon to teach their

eyelids gush out with waters. **19** For a voice of wailing is heard out of Zion, How are we spoiled! we are greatly confounded, because we have forsaken the land, because ²our dwellings have cast us out. **20** Yet hear the word of the LORD, O ye women, and let your ear receive the word of his mouth, and teach your daughters wailing, and every one her neighbour lamentation. **21** For death is come up into our windows, and is entered into our palaces, to cut off ^athe children from without, and the young men from the streets. **22** Speak, Thus saith the LORD, Even the carcasses of men shall fall ^bas dung upon the open field, and as the handful after the harvestman, and none shall gather them.

23 Thus saith the LORD, ^cLet not the

^a Lev. 18. 28; 20. 22. — ^b a Chapter 6. 11. — ^c Chap. 8. 2; 16. 4. — ^d Eccles. 9. 11. — ^e 1 Cor. 1. 31; 2 Cor. 10. 17. — ^f Micah 6. 8; 7. 18. — ^g Rom. 2. 8, 9.

arts to others. **Teach your daughters wailing, and every one her neighbour lamentation**—The ravages of death have overstepped the resources of mourning, as in the times of fearful pestilence.

21. Death is come up into our windows—Implying his resistlessness, and the universality of his conquests. He comes in by all avenues. As the result of his work there are **no children... without, nor young men in the streets.** Silence and death bear undisputed sway.

22. Carcasses of men—The burning utterances of the prophet burst forth into one vivid and comprehensive statement—a fitting conclusion to this remarkable passage. The dead shall be too many to be buried, as in chap. viii, 32, 33. As the reaper lets fall his **handful** of grain for the gleaner, so death shall cast down his handful, and none shall gather them.

THE ONLY SAFETY, 23-26.

23. In such a calamity, where is help and deliverance? Not in human **wisdom, nor might, nor riches.** Could these avail, this ruin had not come.

24. I am the Lord—Driven from all these human defences, God still remains, and so the grand lesson for this time and for all time is, **Let him**

wise *man* glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty *man* glory in his might, let not the rich *man* glory in his riches.

24 But ^dlet him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I *am* the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: ^efor in these things I delight, saith the LORD.

25 Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that ^fI will ^gpunish all them which are circumcised with the uncircumcised; **26** Egypt, and Judah, and Edom, and the children of Ammon, and Moab, and all that are ^hin the ⁱutmost corners, that dwell in the wilderness: for all these nations are uncircumcised, and all the house of Israel are ^juncircumcised in the heart.

¹¹ Heb. *visit upon*.—¹² Heb. *cut off into corners, or, having the corners of their hair polled*.—^g Chap. 23. 23; 49. 32.—^h Lev. 26. 41; Ezek. 41. 7; Rom. 2. 28, 29.

that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth... the Lord.

3. The Means of Escape from Impending Punishment.

CHAPTERS ix, 25-x, 25.

25. Circumcised with the uncircumcised—Rather, *circumcised in uncircumcision*; literally, *with the foreskin*. The meaning is, God will cut off all who are really uncircumcised, and among these are included those who have received *merely* the outward rite.

26. Egypt... Judah, etc.—Many commentators, and among them Ewald and Nägelsbach, understand from this passage that all the peoples enumerated practised the rite of circumcision. But there is not sufficient historical proof of this; indeed there is positive evidence to the contrary. For instance, Josephus (*Ant.*, xiii, 9, 1) tells how John Hyrcanus offered the Edomites the alternative of circumcision, which they accepted. We conclude, then, that the statement, **all these nations are uncircumcised**, means all nations besides Israel. and that the word "these," which the translators have inserted, should be thrown out. **All that are in the utmost corners**—Rather, *all who have the corners of their hair shorn*. The allusion is to certain Arabian tribes who were ac-

O. T.

CHAPTER X.

HEAR ye the word which the LORD speaketh unto you, O house of Israel: **2** Thus saith the LORD, ^aLearn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed at them. **3** For

^a Lev. 18, 3; 20, 23.—1 Heb. *statutes*, or, *ordinances* are vanity.

customed to crop the edges of the beard, and to cut off the hair from the temples, a practice forbidden to the Israelites. Lev. xix, 27.

CHAPTER X.

THE NOTHINGNESS OF THE FALSE GODS, 1-5.

Several eminent German critics have pronounced against the genuineness of the first sixteen verses of this chapter. Among these is the scholarly and evangelical Nägelsbach. Some regard the passage as interpolated from Isaiah, while others, and among them Nägelsbach, reject this theory of its origin. Upon this general question we observe:

1. The external evidence for the passage is practically perfect. It receives the unanimous testimony of the Hebrew MSS. and the ancient Versions. The partial qualification which this statement needs is, that four of the verses, namely, 6, 7, 8, and 10, are wanting in the Septuagint. But inasmuch as we meet with similar omissions everywhere in the Septuagint—it being estimated that about 2,700 of the Hebrew words in this book are unrepresented in that Version—very slight significance should attach to this fact. The only considerations which should shake our faith in the genuineness of these verses are those which come from within. And in the general it should be said, that internal evidence should be allowed to stand against clear and unanimous external testimony only when of the most positive and conclusive character. The hypothesis of unguineness should be accepted only when it becomes certain that no other can be admitted.

2. The reasons urged against this passage are: (a) That it interrupts the

the 'customs of the people are vain: for ^bone cutteth a tree out of the forest, the work of the hands of the workman, with the axe. **4** They deck it with silver and with gold; they ^cfasten it with nails and with hammers, that it move not. **5** They are upright as the palm tree,

^b Isa. 40, 19, 20; 44, 9, 10, etc.; 45, 20.—^c Isa. 41, 7; 46, 7.

continuity of thought. But Jeremiah nowhere shows close logical coherence. The book is full of sudden and marked transitions. Its character is emotional rather than logical. (b) That the subject matter indicates a later time. But the passage is not inappropriate to any time, and especially to this one, in which idolatry was a *living issue*. (c) That the language differs from that ordinarily employed by Jeremiah. The opposite is the truth. The passage contains some of his characteristic expressions, such as the term *vanity*, for idols, *day of visitation*, etc., etc. (See a full list of these in Keil, *in loc.*) We conclude, then, that there is no sufficient ground for denying the genuineness of the passage. The eleventh verse of this chapter is in Chaldee, probably because it was a current aphorism familiar alike to the Jews and the Chaldeans, and inserted here in its popular form.

2. **Way of the heathen**—Their religious way, their worship. **Signs of heaven**—Those extraordinary appearances of any kind which alarm the ignorant and superstitious.

3. **Customs**—Rather, *ordinances*, that is, their religious observances. These are as **vain** as the things on which they are based, namely, idols. The prophet now proceeds to show the vanity of idols in a passage which does, indeed, closely follow the thought of Isaiah, but is especially terse and graphic, and, when we consider that it was spoken when the popular current was setting toward idolatry, we shall feel it to be bold and effective. In the whole there is almost a vein of humour, which contrasts agreeably with Jeremiah's accustomed pathos and sadness.

5. **Upright as the palm tree**—Rather, *as a palm tree of turned work*, etc.

but ^d speak not: they must needs be ^e borne, because they cannot go. Be not afraid of them; for ^f they cannot do evil, neither also is it in them to do good. **6** Forasmuch as there is none ^g like unto thee, O Lord; thou art great, and thy name is great in might. **7** ^h Who would not fear thee, O King of nations? for ⁱ to thee doth it appertain: forasmuch as ^j among all the wise men of the nations, and in all their kingdoms, there is none like unto thee. **8** But they are ^k altogether ^l brutish and foolish: the stock is a doctrine of vanities. **9** Silver spread into plates is brought from Tarshish, and

¹ gold from Uphaz, the work of the workman, and of the hands of the founder: blue and purple is their clothing: they are all ^m the work of cunning men. **10** But the Lord is the ⁿ true God, he is ^o the living God, and an ^p everlasting King: at his wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation. **11** ^q Thus shall ye say unto them, ^r The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even ^s they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens. **12** He ^t hath made the earth by his power, he hath ^u established the world by his wis-

^d Psa. 115. 5; 135. 16; Hab. 2. 19; 1 Cor. 12. 2. — ^e Psa. 115. 7; Isa. 46. 1, 7. — ^f Isa. 41. 23. — ^g Exod. 13. 11; Psa. 86. 8, 10. — ^h Rev. 15. 4. — ⁱ 2 Or. it liketh thee. — ^j Psa. 89. 6. — ^k 3 Heb. in one, or, at once. — ^l Psa. 115. 8; Isa. 41. 29; Hab. 2. 18; Zech. 10. 2; Rom. 1. 21, 22.

¹ Dan. 10. 5. — ^m Psa. 115. 4. — ⁿ 4 Heb. God of truth. Psa. 31. 5. — ^o 1 Tim. 6. 17. — ^p 5 Heb. King of eternity. — ^q Psa. 10. 16. — ^r 6 In the Chaldean language. — ^s See Psa. 96. 5. — ^t 7 Ver. 15; Isa. 2. 18; Zech. 13. 2. — ^u Gen. 1. 1, 6, 9; Psa. 136. 5, 6; chap. 51. 15, etc. — ^v Psa. 93. 1.

The word rendered "palm tree," occurs besides only in Judges iv, 5, where it clearly has this meaning. But as in later Hebrew, (for example, Cant. iii, 6. Joel ii. 30, and in the Talmud,) the root yields the sense of *pillar*. Keil would give it that sense in this place, and so translates, *as a lathe-turned pillar*, etc., that is, lifeless and motionless. This verse is peculiar to Jeremiah. There is nothing answering to it in either of the kindred passages in Isaiah. The whole passage is grotesquely faithful, and the conclusion commends itself, **They cannot do evil, neither also is it in them to do good.**

THE INCOMPARABLE JEHOVAH, 6-11.

6. Forasmuch—A complete misapprehension of the force of the original, which is a double negative, doubtless employed for purposes of emphasis—**none like unto thee.** It is a fitting introduction to this strophe, (verses 6-11,) in which the almighty power of God is set forth in contrast with these dumb idols.

7. O King of nations—Mark here, as in many other Old Testament passages, the conception of God as the *universal ruler of mankind*, and not merely the national God of the Jews. **Doth it appertain**—The subject is indefinite, as though all dignity should be included. **Wise men**—"Men," inserted by the translators, is mis-

leading, and should not be used. **Wise ones**—Whether men or gods.

8. The stock, etc.—Rather, *the teaching of idols is wood.* They themselves are wood, and nothing can proceed from them better than what is in them. The special point of this sentence, at once so keenly satirical and so truly philosophical, is this: Their shaping, polishing, decking, and plating would seem to be for the purpose of getting something more precious than wood. As they look upon their finished god, decked out with his trappings of gold and silver, they forget his genesis, and think of him as something else than he really is. And so the prophet condenses all the possibilities of the case into a single sentence; and then, as if in the way of individual justification, he hastily runs over the process of the manufacture of idols.

9. Tarshish—Generally supposed to have been located in the south of Spain. It is thought from the context to have been an opulent and cultured city. **Uphaz**—Thought by Gesenius and Keil to be a dialectical variety of Ophir, and the Targum and the Syriac Version so treat it. Others, however, regard it as a distinct name. It occurs elsewhere only in Dan. x, 5.

MANIFESTATIONS OF JEHOVAH'S ALMIGHTINESS, 12-16.

12. Power . . . wisdom . . . discretion—This enumeration of the natural

dom, and 'hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion. **13** ^a When he uttereth his voice, *there is a* ⁷ multitude of waters in the heavens, and ^v he causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; he maketh lightnings ⁸ with rain, and bringeth forth the wind out of his treasures. **14** ^w Every man ⁹ is ^x brutish in *his* knowledge: ^y every founder is confounded by the graven image: ² for his molten image *is* falsehood, and *there is* no breath in them. **15** *They are* vanity, and the work of errors: in the time of their visitation ^a they shall perish. **16** ^b The portion of Jacob is not like them: for he is the

former of all *things*; and *'Israel is the rod of his inheritance: 'The Lord of hosts is his name.*

17 ^c Gather up thy wares out of the land, O ¹⁰ inhabitant of the fortress. **18** For thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will ¹ sling out the inhabitants of the land at this once, and will distress them, ^a that they may find *it so.*

19 ^b Woe is me for my hurt! my wound is grievous: but I said, ¹ Truly this *is* a grief, and ^k I must bear it. **20** ¹ My tabernacle is spoiled, and all my cords are broken: my children are gone forth of me, and they *are* not: *there is none* to stretch forth my tent

^t Job 9. 8; ^psa. 104. 2; ⁱsa. 40. 22.—^u Job 38. 34.—⁷ Or, *noise.*—^v ^psa. 135. 7.—⁸ Or, *for rain.*—^w Chap. 51. 17, 18.—⁹ Or, *is more brutish than to know.*—^x ^prov. 30. 2.—^y ⁱsa. 42. 17; 44. 11; 45. 16.—^z ^{hab.} 2. 18.—^a Verse 11.—^b ^psa. 16. 5; 73. 26; 119. 57; chap.

51. 19; ⁱam. 3. 24.—^c ^{deut.} 32. 9; ^psa. 74. 2.—^d ⁱsa. 47. 4; 51. 15; 54. 5; chap. 31. 35; 32. 18; 50. 34.—^e See chap. 6. 1; ^ezek. 12. 3, etc.—¹⁰ ^{heb.} *inhabitant.*—^f ¹ ^{sam.} 25. 29; chap. 16. 13.—^g ^ezek. 6. 10.—^h Chap. 4. 19; 8. 21; 9. 1.—ⁱ ^psa. 77. 10.—^k ^{micah} 7. 9.—^l Chap. 4. 20.

attributes of God as exhibited in the material creation is interesting. They are graded one above the other in true logical order. As through a window we look through this verse, and see how the revelations of God in his word and in his works are one; or if, in any sense, they are two, they are still harmonious. First, "power," and its product is the dead **earth**; then "wisdom," and its product is the organized **world**; finally, "discretion," or constructive skill, and its product is the universe, with all its adjustments and the mutual adaptations of its various parts.

13. When he uttereth his voice.—Every thunderstorm becomes a declaration of God. There is some question as to the exact translation of this verse, though none at all as to its general meaning. A literal rendering of the first clause, retaining the words and idiom just as they stand in the original, would be, *At the voice of his giving a roar of waters in the heavens.* The remainder of the verse answers to ^psa. cxxxv, 7, but is probably original here, and quoted there.

14. Every man is brutish.—In the presence of such exhibitions of God only the brutish and besotted can find satisfaction in idols.

15. Work of errors.—Rather, *of mockery*; a thing that deserves only ridicule and contempt, and brings it upon all its votaries.

MISERY OF THE PEOPLE, 17–25.

17. Gather up, etc.—From the presentation of idolatry the prophet now returns to the main subject. With characteristic abruptness he calls upon the people to get ready for their march into captivity. **Thy wares**—Literally, *thy bundle*; not articles of merchandise, but articles for necessary use, such as could be hastily caught up and carried about the person. **Inhabitant of the fortress**—Rather, *thou that sittest in siege.*

18. I will sling out.—Compare ⁱsa. xxii, 17, 18. **This once.**—Literally, *this time*; implying that in contrast with other and more partial judgments the grand catastrophe is hastening on. **That they may find it so.**—The meaning is doubtful, but this, on the whole, seems preferable. The word rendered **distress** means to *press hard, to close in.* The thought, then, is, I will press them hard, (as into a strait place.) that they may find them.

19. Woe is me.—From this to the end of the chapter the prophet speaks in the name of the congregation—the Jewish Church. We hear her lamentation, and her prayer for mercy to herself and for judgment on her enemies.

20. Tabernacle.—As though even at this time the tent was the ordinary dwelling. **Cords.**—Those which stayed the tent. **Children...are not.**—^{matth.} ii, 13.

any more, and to set up my curtains. **21** For the pastors are become brutish, and have not sought the LORD: therefore they shall not prosper, and all their flocks shall be scattered. **22** Behold, the noise of the bruit is come, and a great commotion out of the ^m north country, to make the cities of Judah desolate, and a ⁿ den of dragons.

23 O LORD, I know that the ^o way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. **24** O LORD, ^p correct me, but with judgment;

m Chap. 1. 15; 4. 6; 5. 15; 6. 22.—*n* Chap. 9. 11.—*o* Prov. 16. 1; 20. 24.—*p* Psal. 6. 1; 38. 1; chap. 30. 11.

21. Pastors are... brutish—Compare chap. ii, 8, etc. **Shall not prosper**—Rather, *have not dealt wisely*, and hence **their flocks shall be scattered**.

22. The noise of the bruit, etc.—Better, *a voice is heard; behold it cometh, a great commotion from the north country* (literally, the land of midnight) *to make the cities of Judah desolate, an abode of jackals*. See chap. ix, 11.

23, 24. It is not in man... to direct his steps—A beautiful and spiritual prayer, the language of humility and penitence, of humble dependence on God, and of earnest supplication for his favour. **Correct... with judgment**—That is, in such measure as will best correct the evil.

25. With very slight difference this verse is identical in language with Psal. lxxix, 6, 7.

CHAPTER XI.

In this and the following chapter we have what appears to be a compilation of discourses delivered in an early period of Jeremiah's ministry. This is indicated by the character of the allusions to the book of the law, which are such as to be readily explained by that discovery of this book mentioned in 2 Kings xxii, 8, and the revival which ensued thereupon. Still more conclusively is it indicated by the fact that the prophet still resides at Anathoth, and is subjected to persecution there. Instead, then, of assigning these chapters to the reign of Jehoiakim, with Nägelsbach and many others, we would place them in the reign of Josiah, and

not in thine anger, lest thou ¹¹ bring me to nothing. **25** ^q Pour out thy fury upon the heathen ^r that know thee not, and upon the families that call not on thy name: for they have eaten up Jacob, and ^s devoured him, and consumed him, and have made his habitation desolate.

CHAPTER XI.

THE word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, **2** Hear ye the words of this covenant, and speak unto the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of

¹¹ Heb. *diminish me*. — ^q Psal. 79. 6. — ^r Job 18. 21; 1 Thess. 4. 5; 2 Thess. 1. 8. — ^s Chap. 8. 16.

so find in them some suggestion as to the spirit of the times, and the character of the teaching which was made instrumental of that wonderful revival. The proof which many have regarded as conclusive in favour of a later date is, that in chap. xii, 14, we seem to have a specific allusion to the event recorded in 2 Kings xxiv, 2. But this is inconclusive, as these words are perfectly intelligible without assuming this special allusion, as even Nägelsbach admits.

THE COVENANT BETWEEN JEHOVAH AND ISRAEL, 1-8.

1. The word that came to Jeremiah—This form of title is such as Jeremiah prefixes to his larger sections, and hence may properly be taken as extending over this and the two following chapters.

2. The words of this covenant—In 2 Chron. xxxiv, 14, we are told that "when they brought out the money that was brought into the house of the Lord, Hilkiah the priest found a book of the law of the Lord by the hand of Moses." In 2 Kings xxiii, 3, where this same newly-found book of the law is mentioned, the phrase, "the words of this covenant," is used as in this verse. Numerous other references in 2 Kings xxii and xxiii, and in the corresponding passages in Chronicles, place it beyond reasonable doubt that the allusion here is specially to this book of the law. See Deut. xxviii, 69; xxix, 8; 2 Kings xxiii, 3; 2 Chron. xxxiv, 30; and Jer. xxxiv, 18.

Jerusalem; **3** And say thou unto them, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel; ** Cursed be the man that obeyeth not the words of this covenant,* **4** Which I commanded your fathers in the day *that* I brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, *^b from the iron furnace, saying, ^c Obey my voice, and do them, according to all which I command you: so shall ye be my people, and I will be your God:* **5** That I may perform the *^d oath* which I have sworn unto your fathers, to give them a land flowing with milk and honey, as *it is* this day. Then answered I, and said, *^e So be it, O Lord.* **6** Then the Lord said unto me, Proclaim all

these words in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem, saying, Hear ye the words of this covenant, *^e and do them.* **7** For I earnestly protested unto your fathers in the day *that* I brought them up out of the land of Egypt, *even unto this day, ^f rising early and protesting, saying, Obey my voice.* **8** *^g Yet they obeyed not, nor inclined their ear, but ^h walked every one in the ⁱ imagination of their evil heart: therefore I will bring upon them all the words of this covenant, which I commanded them to do; but they did them not.* **9** And the Lord said unto me, *^j A conspiracy is found among the men of Judah, and*

a Deut. 27. 26; Gal. 3. 10.—*b* Deut. 4. 20; 1 Kings 8. 51.—*c* Lev. 26. 3. 12; chap. 7. 23.—*d* Deut. 7. 12. 13; Psa. 105. 9, 10.—*e* Heb. *Amen*, Deut. 27. 15-26.

e Rom. 2. 13; James 1. 22.—*f* Chap. 7. 13, 25; 35. 15.—*g* Chap. 7. 26.—*h* Chap. 3. 17; 7. 24; 9. 14.—*i* Or, *stubbornness*.—*j* Ezek. 22. 25; Hosea 6. 9.

3. Cursed, etc.—An exact quotation from Deut. xxvii, 26, except that here **obeyeth** is put for *confirmeth*; this word having been used originally with reference to the formal ratification of the people. The word here used, however, is the common and the vital word.

4. Iron furnace—A phrase first used with the same reference in Deut. iv, 20. Primarily it suggests the sufferings there of the Israelites; also, the purpose of that affliction: for the one purpose of all suffering to God's people is purification—the separation of the gold from the dross, the precious from the base.

5. Land flowing with milk and honey—Who has not felt the difficulty of this description as applied to Palestine? Three considerations tend to relieve it: 1) Its contrast with Egypt, which the Israelites of that day would set up as a standard, it being the only land with which they were acquainted when this language was at first used. Now Egypt is literally the creation of the Nile. In the immediate vicinity of that river the country is exceedingly fertile, but elsewhere a sterile desert. Palestine, with its hills and valleys, its plains and its forests, its watercourses and its seacoasts, was indeed, especially to a pastoral people, a rich land in comparison. 2) Its contrast with the Sinaitic peninsula. Forty years of experience in Arabia Petrea would prepare the people for

a very keen appreciation of such a land as Palestine, which was, as compared with this, almost as "the garden of the Lord." 3) Its contrast with itself at the present time. Twenty centuries of neglect and abuse have doubtless materially changed the face of this land. It is not doubtful that the Canaan of the Old Testament was a very different country from the Palestine of to-day. And putting with all the rest the character of Oriental speech, which delights in pictorial phrases, we shall not find it difficult to understand the expressions which seem to many so exaggerated. **Then answered I**—As though the old scene so graphically described in Deut. xxvii, 14-26, was being re-enacted. The answer of the prophet is the same as the people then made, and should be translated, as there, *Amen, Jehovah.*

6. In the cities of Judah—Comp. 2 Kings xxiii, 15-20. Henderson suggests that Jeremiah accompanied Josiah in visits to the different cities to carry forward his work of reformation. Certainly the work of these two reformers was mutually helpful, and each has an illustrative bearing upon that of the other.

THE BREAKING OF THE COVENANT BY JUDAH, 9-13.

9. Conspiracy—Such unanimity as would be brought about by formal preconcertment.

among the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

10 They are turned back to ^a the iniquities of their forefathers, which refused to hear my words; and they went after other gods to serve them: the house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken my covenant which I made with their fathers.

11 Therefore thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will bring evil upon them, which they shall not be able ^a to escape; and ¹ though they shall cry unto me, I will not hearken unto them. **12** Then shall the cities of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem go, and ^m cry unto the gods unto whom they offer incense: but they shall not save them at all in the time of their ^a trouble. **13** For according to the number of thy ^a cities were thy gods, O Judah; and according to the number of the streets of Jerusalem have ye set up altars to that ^a shameful thing, even altars to burn incense unto Baal. **14** There-

fore ^a pray not thou for this people, neither lift up a cry or prayer for them: for I will not hear *them* in the time that they cry unto me for their ^a trouble.

15 ^p What hath my beloved to do in mine house, seeing she hath wrought lewdness with many, and ^r the holy flesh is passed from thee? ^a when thou doest evil, then thou ^a rejoicest. **16** The Lord called thy name, ^r A green olive tree, fair, and of goodly fruit: with the noise of a great tumult he hath kindled fire upon it, and the branches of it are broken.

17 For the Lord of hosts, ^a that planted thee, hath pronounced evil against thee, for the evil of the house of Israel and of the house of Judah, which they have done against themselves to provoke me to anger in offering incense unto Baal.

18 And the Lord hath given me knowledge of it, and I know it: then thou showedst me their doings. **19** But I was like a lamb or an ox that is brought

^k Ezek. 20, 18.—³ Heb. *to go forth of*.—⁷ Psa. 1^a. 41; Prov. 1. 28; Isa. 1. 15; chap. 14. 12; Ezek. 8. 18; Micah 3. 4; Zech. 7. 13.—^m Deut. 32. 37, 38.—⁴ Heb. *evil*.—ⁿ Chap. 2. 28.—⁵ Heb. *swame*, chap. 3. 24; Hosea 9. 10.—^o Exod. 32. 10; chap. 7. 16; 14. 11; 1 John 5. 16.

⁶ Heb. *evil*.—^p Psa. 50. 16; Isa. 1. 11, etc.—⁷ Heb. *What is to my beloved in my house?*—^q Ezek. 16. 25, etc.—^r Hag. 2. 12-14; Titus 1. 15.—^s Or, *when thy evil is*.—^t Prov. 2. 14.—^u Psa. 52. 8; Rom. 11. 17.—^v Isa. 5. 2; chap. 2. 21.

10. Iniquities of their forefathers—The original is more definite, and makes the allusion specific as to the idolatries of the wilderness. **Have broken my covenant**—These words, when placed by the side of that passage which sets forth the solemn and formal covenant of the people, given in Deut. xxvii, have something of the awfulness of the judgment day itself.

13. Shameful thing—See chap. iii, 24.

CALAMITY CONSEQUENT ON BREAKING THE COVENANT, 14-17.

14. Pray not...for this people—Because they had reached that climax of guilt in which intercessory prayer may no longer avail.

15. What hath my beloved, etc.—The language here is characterized by such difficulty as has led many conservative and evangelical commentators to conjecture a corruption of the text. This conjecture is supported by the fact that the ancient Versions do not agree with the Hebrew—though neither do they agree among themselves. The Septuagint renders the last part, *shall vows and holy flesh turn*

away thine evil from thee? The Syriac and Vulgate agree in treating the words rendered **lewdness** and **many** as in opposition, so that the middle clause would read, *to work the enormity, the manifold*, alluding to the many-shaped sin of idolatry. But if we reject all suggestions of change in the text, perhaps the most probable rendering of the original as it now stands would be, *What hath my beloved in my house? To do wickedness? The chiefs and the holy flesh shall pass away from thee. When thy iniquity is, then thou rejoicest.* This term of endearment sounds strangely in the midst of these charges against the nation, and yet it is thoroughly in harmony with the spirit of this book and of the Old Testament. Unworthy and corrupt as this people had become, they were still the "beloved" of the Lord.

16. Green olive tree—As in Psa. lii, 8; cxxviii, 3; Hos. xiv, 6. **Tumult**—Used besides only in Ezek. i, 24.

CONSPIRACY OF THE MEN OF ANATHOTH, 18-23.

19. Like a lamb or an ox—Rather, *as a tame lamb*. Such as is frequently

to the slaughter; and I knew not that they had devised devices against me, *saying*, Let us destroy ^o the tree with the fruit thereof, ^w and let us cut him off from ^x the land of the living, that his name may be no more remembered. **20** But, O Lord of hosts, that judgest righteously, that ^y triest the reins and the heart, let me see thy vengeance on them: for unto thee have I revealed my cause. **21** Therefore thus saith the Lord of the men of Anathoth, ^z that seek thy life, saying, ^a Prophecy not in the name of the Lord, that thou die not by our hand: **22** Therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts, Behold, I will ^b punish them: the young men shall die by the sword; their sons and their daughters shall die by famine: **23** And there shall be no

^r Chap. 18. 18.—⁹ Heb. *the stalk with his bread*.—^v Psal. 83. 4.—^x Psal. 27. 13; 116. 9; 142. 5.—^y 1 Sam. 16. 7; 1 Chron. 28. 9; Psal. 7. 9; chap. 17. 10; 20. 12; Rev. 2. 23.—^z Chap. 12. 5. 6.—^a Isa. 30. 10; Amos 2. 12; 7. 13, 16; Micah 2. 9.—¹⁰ Heb. *visit upon*.—^b Chap. 23. 12; 46. 21; 48. 44; 50. 27; Luke 19. 44.

found in Arab tents. The comparison is most felicitous, as suggesting innocence and harmlessness. **Tree with the fruit**—Literally, *tree in its bread*.

23. No remnant—They shall be utterly destroyed. But this language is not to be pressed to the extreme of mathematical nicety. It is not contradicted by the fact that a hundred and twenty-eight men of Anathoth returned from the exile. Ezra ii, 23; Neh. vii, 27.

CHAPTER XII.

COMPLAINT AT THE PROSPERITY OF THE WICKED, 1-6.

The opening verses of this chapter connect closely with the preceding. The language represents the attitude of Jeremiah's mind when confronted with persecution and personal danger. Deserted and persecuted by those who should be his friends, in that loneliness of spirit which is the necessary experience of every reformer, he betakes himself to God. His trial and complaint are such as speak forth in Psal. xxxiv, xlix, lxxiii, and in the book of Job. When we consider that the sanctions of the Mosaic law were largely, though not entirely, limited to this world, we can well understand how that temptation which has always

remnant of them: for I will bring evil upon the men of Anathoth, *even* ^b the year of their visitation.

CHAPTER XII.

RIGHTEOUS ^a art thou, O Lord, when I plead with thee: yet let me talk with thee of *thy* judgments: ^b Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper? *wherefore* are all they happy that deal very treacherously? **2** Thou hast planted them, yea, they have taken root: ^c they grow, yea, they bring forth fruit: ^d thou *art* near in their mouth, and far from their reins. **3** But thou, O Lord, ^e knowest me: thou hast seen me, and ^f tried mine heart ^g toward thee: pull them out like sheep for the slaughter, and prepare them for ^h the day of

^a Psalm 51. 4.—¹ Or, *let me reason the case with thee*.—^b Job 12. 6; 21. 7; Psalm 37. 1, 35; 73. 3, etc.; chapter 5. 28; Habakkuk 1. 4; Malachi 3. 15.—² Heb. *they go on*.—^c Isaiah 29. 13; Matthew 15. 8; Mark 7. 6.—^d Psalm 17. 3; 139. 1.—^e Chapter 11. 20.—³ Heb. *with thee*.—^f James 5. 5.

been a severe and bitter one to good men should have been peculiarly so to him whose only reward seemed to be abandonment and temporal ruin. So completely was the heart of the prophet in sympathy with the divine indignation against the impiety of the wicked, that he is amazed at the slowness of God's judgments.

1. Righteous art thou, etc.—A true theistic faith, clinging to God amid difficulty and darkness. **Let me talk, etc.**—The marginal rendering is better, *let me reason the case with thee*. He would bring his human weakness and his sore need to God, and plead for relief. **Happy**—Safe, undisturbed, unpersecuted.

3. Thou, O Lord, knowest me—A solemn appeal to the heart-searching God, not in the spirit of Phariseeism, but with a clear consciousness of thorough honesty. The fact that God is omniscient is terrible to the sinner, but a source of ineffably precious consolation and strength to the Christian. **Pull them out**—Literally, *tear them out*. The same word is used in chap. x, 20, of the breaking of the cords of the tent, and in Ezek. xvii, 9, of the tearing up of roots. No more vigorous word could have been used in this place.

slaughter. **4** How long shall ^athe land mourn, and the herbs of every field wither, ^bfor the wickedness of them that dwell therein? ^cthe beasts are consumed, and the birds; because they said, He shall not see our last end.

5 If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses? and *if* in the land of peace, *wherein* thou trustedst, *they wearied thee*, then how wilt thou do in ^kthe swelling of Jordan?

■ For even ^lthy brethren, and the house

^a Chap. 23. 10; Hos. 4. 3.—^b Psa. 107. 34.

^c Chap. 4. 25; 7. 10; 9. 10; Hosea 4. 3.—

^k Josh. 3. 15; 1 Chron. 12. 1; chap. 49. 19; 50. 44.

^l Chap. 9. 4; 11. 19, 21.

4. How long shall the land mourn—In the second verse the prophet intimates his temptation growing out of the prosperity of the wicked. And yet here he speaks of the whole land as if lying under the shadow of a universal curse. But there is here no incongruity. An individual may be wicked and prosperous, but when wickedness and corruption prevail there is general misery. In the aggregate, the amount of practical righteousness in any community will accurately measure the amount of well-being in the same community.

5. If...they have wearied thee—In this beautiful verse Jehovah rebukes Jeremiah's impatience. It consists of two proverbial sayings, unlike in form and specific import, but alike relevant to the object of the address. The present trials of Jeremiah at Anathoth are a mere running **with footmen**, but there will soon be a contending **with horses**. And if he can be tranquil and truthful only in a **land of peace**, where there is no difficulty and no danger, how can he tread the jingly banks of the Jordan, where is the lair of ravenous beasts? In this God foreshadows the prophet's swiftly-coming trials. See chaps. xxvi, 8, 9; xxxii, 2; xxxviii, 8. What he was then experiencing was but the beginning of sorrows—merely an ordinary trial as compared with the appalling calamities before him. **Swelling of Jordan**—Literally, *pride of Jordan*. The same phrase is used in chap. xlix, 19, and l, 44, and in Zech. xi, 3, in all of which places it is

of thy father, even they have dealt treacherously with thee; yea, ^athey have called a multitude after thee: ^mbelieve them not, though they speak ⁿfair words unto thee.

7 I have forsaken mine house, I have left mine heritage; I have given ^othe dearly beloved of my soul into the hand of her enemies. **8** Mine heritage is unto me as a lion in the forest; it ^rcrieth out against me: therefore have I hated it. **9** Mine heritage is unto me as a ^sspeckled bird, the birds round about

^a Or, *they cried after thee fully*.—^m Prov. 26. 25.—ⁿ Heb. *good things*.—^o Heb. *the love*.

^r Or, *yelleth*.—^s Heb. *giveth out his voice*.

^s Or, *bird having talons*.

mentioned as the haunt of lions. Hence it cannot mean, as the Authorized Version has it, the "swelling," or inundation, "of Jordan," but rather the jingly thicket on its banks.

6. Even thy brethren—Mentioned by way of emphatic specification, thus showing to Jeremiah how bitter was the experience before him, not only of loneliness and desolation, but even of persecution and personal danger.

ISRAEL'S CONSPIRACY PUNISHED, 7-13.

7. The whole passage (verses 7-17) is characterized by an obvious unity, and is throughout the language of Jehovah. Its connexion with what precedes is general rather than particular. The personal trials of Jeremiah had been foreshadowed, and here is set forth the general state of things out of which these trials would come. **I have forsaken**—These and the following perfects are used prophetically. It is done only in the divine purpose—not actually executed. **House... heritage... dearly beloved**—All refer to the same subject, Judah. Language is too weak to carry the burden of God's yearning tenderness for his people. **Into the hand**—Literally, *the palm*. The hand is the symbol of power; the palm of passive receptiveness.

8. As a lion—Fierce and uncontrollable, roaring against him with rage and blasphemy.

9. A speckled bird, etc.—The first two clauses in this verse are in the original questions, but they involve real affirmations. The fact that a

are against her; come ye, assemble all the beasts of the field, ¹⁰ come to devour. **10** Many ^o pastors have destroyed my vineyard, they have ^a trodden my portion under foot, they have made my ¹¹ pleasant portion a desolate wilderness.

11 They have made it desolate, and being desolate ^r it mourneth unto me; the whole land is made desolate, because ^s no man layeth it to heart. **12** The

spoilers are come upon all high places through the wilderness: for the sword of the Lord shall devour from the *one* end of the land even to the *other* end of the land: no flesh shall have peace.

13 ^r They have sown wheat, but shall reap thorns: they have put themselves to pain, but shall not profit: and ¹² they shall be ashamed of your revenues because of the fierce anger of the Lord.

¹⁰ Or, *cause them to come.*—*n* Isa. 56. 9; chap. 7. 33.—*o* Chap. 6. 3.—*p* Isa. 5. 1. 5.—*q* Isa. 63. 18.—¹¹ Heb. *portion of desire.*—*r* Ver. 4.—*s* Isa. 42. 25.—*t* Lev. 26. 16; Deut. 28. 38;

strange-looking bird is sure to be set upon by all the others is appropriated by the prophet as an instrument of expression and illustration. Then comes the summons to all the wild beasts to gather round Judah and devour her.

10. Many pastors—Rather, *shepherds*. Pastor, in the sense of shepherd, is never found in any book of the Old Testament except Jeremiah. The enclosure of the vineyard is broken down, letting in the shepherds with their flocks to browse upon the tender vines.

11. The rhetorical effect of the previous verse is heightened and intensified in this. *They have made it desolate... desolate it mourneth unto me... desolate is the whole land, for no one layeth it to heart.*

12. No flesh... peace—See Gen. vi. 12. The term "flesh" is here used in the same way, but with narrower application.

13. Sown wheat... reap thorns—Apparently an aphorism for coming to the opposite of what is aimed at. **Revenues**—Produce, the old meaning of this word.

PARDON AND RESTORATION, 14–17.

14. Mine evil neighbours—Such as the Philistines, Syrians, Edomites, Ammonites, Moabites, etc.; all who

14 Thus saith the Lord against all mine evil neighbours, that ^a touch the inheritance which I have caused my people Israel to inherit; Behold, I will ^v pluck them out of their land, and pluck out the house of Judah from among them.

15 ^w And it shall come to pass, after that I have plucked them out I will return, and have compassion on them, ^x and will bring them again, every man to his heritage, and every man to his land.

16 And it shall come to pass, if they will diligently learn the ways of my people, ^y to swear by my name, The Lord liveth; as they taught my people to swear by Baal; then shall they be ^z built in the midst of my people.

17 But if they will not ^a obey, I will utterly pluck up and destroy that nation, saith the Lord.

Micah 6. 15; Hag. 1. 6.—¹² Or, *ye.*—*u* Zech. 2. 8.—*v* Deut. 30. 3; chap. 32. 37.—*w* Ezek. 28. 25.—*x* Amos 9. 14.—*y* Chap. 4. 2.—*z* Eph. 2. 20, 21; 1 Pet. 2. 5.—*a* Isa. 60. 12.

at any time had become the spoilers of God's heritage.

15. After that I have plucked—Sharing in Israel's calamity, they shall also share in Israel's mercy. **I will return, etc.**—*I will again have compassion*, a very common Hebraism.

16. Learn the ways of my people—That is, adopt the worship of Jehovah. As they led God's people away into the worship of Baalim, so they shall be led by Israel into "the ways" of Jehovah, and thus be built up with his "people" into a spiritual unity.

CHAPTER XIII.

This thirteenth chapter is complete in itself, and has no direct dependence on what immediately precedes. The mention of the queen-mother in verse 18 (not "queen," as in the common Version) is favourable to the view that this prophecy dates in the reign of Jehoiachin, who, being a mere child, sat on the throne for three months, while probably the government was actually administered by his mother Nehushta. See 2 Chron. xxxvi, 9, and 2 Kings xxiv, 8. But inasmuch as this was a not uncommon arrangement, (1 Kings xii, 13; 2 Kings x, 13, etc.,) this test of the date is by no means conclusive. The considera-

CHAPTER XIII.

THUS saith the LORD unto me, Go and get thee a linen girdle, and put it upon thy loins, and put it not in water. ■ So I got a girdle according to the word of the LORD, and put it on my loins.

tion of arrangement and of subject-matter is in favour of assigning this chapter to the same general period with the two last preceding.

The great question which confronts us in its interpretation respects the passage whose subject is the linen girdle. Is it historical or simply allegorical? Did the prophet actually do what is ascribed to him, or was this only in inward vision, as Calvin, Rosenmüller, Graf, and others, hold? The chief objection to regarding it as historical is the improbability "that Jeremiah should have twice made a journey to the Euphrates merely to prove that a linen girdle, if it lie long in the damp, becomes spoiled, a thing he could have done much nearer home, and which, besides, everybody knew without experiment." The distance from Jerusalem to the Euphrates was about two hundred and fifty miles, and for each journey and return nearly a month would be needed. That such a wasteful expenditure of time and life should be made for a result which, when reached, would be a mere symbol, is, as is alleged, improbable and absurd. But this improbability rests upon several unwarrantable assumptions: 1) That Jeremiah was in the vicinity of Jerusalem at the time when he received this command. This, though probable, is by no means certain; especially if, as many believe, this prophecy belongs to the period of Jehoiachin. It is more than possible that Jeremiah was in enforced or voluntary exile from Jerusalem. 2) That two journeys were made from Jerusalem. Even if Jeremiah was at Jerusalem when he first received the command, it is neither stated nor intimated that he returned there after first leaving the girdle. There is no reason why he may not have remained in the vicinity awaiting his Lord's further commands. 3) That such a journey, if taken, was unnecessary and

3 And the word of the LORD came unto me the second time, saying, 4 Take the girdle that thou hast got, which is upon thy loins, and arise, go to Euphrates, and hide it there in a hole of the rock. 5 So I went, and hid it by Euphrates,

useless. Even if two such journeys were made, as a means of securing a standing ground from which to deliver the prophecy, who may characterize the expenditure as wasteful and unnecessary? We must not apply the paltry measures of this world to the things of God's government over men. There are ways of speaking more effectively than by mere words. Such a journey as this, might set before the people the impending ruin as mere words could not do. 4) That the place—the Euphrates—had no special significance in this symbolism. On the contrary, it was essential. The soiled girdle is not more really significant.

On the whole, then, we conclude that the alleged improbability may not be assumed, and that the considerations bearing against a literal interpretation are inconclusive. The journey of this one man to the Euphrates would not be in vain if it should help to turn to profitable spiritual account the same weary journey of the whole people.

1. **Linen girdle**—"Linen," as being the appointed dress of the priestly order, and so appropriately symbolical of God's holy people whom he had selected for his service. **Put it not in water**—That is, do not wash it, but carry it a soiled and filthy thing, and hence fitly symbolical of a people covered with the filth of their sins.

4. **Euphrates**—The future scene of the captivity. In most other places in the Bible (Jer. li, 63, 2 Chron. xxxv, 20, and perhaps Gen. ii, 14, being the only exceptions) this name is associated with Nahar, (נָהָר,) hence

some have conjectured that the name is here used in a special sense. For instance, some have conjectured that it is used for Ephrath—Bethlehem, with the first weak letter omitted, so that the command would be, *Go to*

as the LORD commanded me. **6** And it came to pass after many days, that the LORD said unto me, Arise, go to Euphrates, and take the girdle from thence, which I commanded thee to hide there. **7** Then I went to Euphrates, and digged, and took the girdle from the place where I had hid it: and, behold, the girdle was marred, it was profitable for nothing. **8** Then the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, **9** Thus saith the LORD, After this manner ^a will I mar the pride of Judah, and the great pride of Jerusalem. **10** This evil people, which refuse to hear my words, which ^b walk in the ^c imagination of their heart, and walk after other gods, to serve them, and to worship them, shall even be as this girdle, which is good for nothing. **11** For as the girdle cleaveth to the loins of a man, so have I caused to cleave unto me the whole house of Israel and the whole house of Judah, saith the LORD; that ^d they might be unto me for a people, and ^e for a name, and for a praise, and for a glory: but they would not hear.

^a Lev. 26. 19.—^b Chap. 9. 14; 11. 8; 16. 12.—^c Or, *stubbornness*.—^d Exod. 19. 5.—^e d Chap. 33. 9.—^f Isa. 51. 17, 21; 63. 6; chap. 25. 27; 51. 7.—^f Psa. 2. 9.

Bethlehem. But this is violent and without warrant, and misses the significance of the locality. Ewald conjectures that the word is from the Arabic for *water-fissure*; "a view," says Keil, "requiring no serious refutation."

7. Digged.—Showing that Jeremiah had filled in with gravel or earth above the girdle, and so concealed it.

9. Mar the pride of Judah.—This was fulfilled in her physical decay—the loss of her temporal greatness.

10. Good for nothing.—In themselves, and to outward appearance, but really more fit for God's high purposes than before. Their political existence was virtually terminated; but as instruments of preparation for the coming reign of Messiah they were still to serve an important use.

11. A people . . . a name . . . a praise . . . a glory.—Observe again here, as in so many other places, the piling up of epithets, as if language must be taxed to the utmost to express what this people are to God. This mode of expressing emphasis illustrates the genius of the Hebrew language, and is specially characteristic of Jeremiah.

12 Therefore thou shalt speak unto them this word; Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Every bottle shall be filled with wine: and they shall say unto thee, Do we not certainly know that every bottle shall be filled with wine? **13** Then shalt thou say unto them, Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will fill all the inhabitants of this land, even the kings that sit upon David's throne, and the priests, and the prophets, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, ^a with drunkenness. **14** And ^b I will dash them ^c one against another, even the fathers and the sons together, saith the LORD: I will not pity, nor spare, nor have mercy, ^d but destroy them.

15 Hear ye, and give ear; be not proud: for the LORD hath spoken. **16** ^e Give glory to the LORD your God, before he cause ^f darkness, and before your feet stumble upon the dark mountains, and, while ye ^g look for light, he turn it into ^h the shadow of death, and make it gross darkness. **17** But if ye

² Heb. *a man against his brother*.—³ Heb. *from destroying them*.—⁴ Josh. 7. 19.—⁵ Isa. 5. 30; 8. 22; Amos 8. 9.—⁶ Isa. 59. 9.—⁷ Psa. 44. 19.

12. Every bottle.—Rather, *jar*. The same term is used in Isa. xxx. 14, and is rendered *potter's vessel*. This remark is in the form of a proverb, as if the more certainly to arrest attention.

13. Kings, etc.—Four kings in succession were destroyed in the downfall of Jerusalem. **Drunkenness.**—Such impotence as comes from "the wine of the wrath of God."

14. Dash them one against another.—See Psa. ii. 9, and Rev. ii. 27. Not civil war, but indiscriminate destruction, is here foretold.

15. Hear ye, etc.—The earnest words of the prophet entreating attention. **Be not proud.**—Because pride would keep them from profiting by the humbling lessons he had given.

16. Before he cause darkness.—Make haste to seize the path of safety, lest nightfall overtake you and make it impossible. **Dark mountains.**—Literally, *mountains of twilight*; a double metaphor, suggesting in one figure sin and danger. Mountains were apt to be dangerous to travel, and in the gloom of gathering night especially so. **He turn it into the shadow of death.**—

will not hear it, my soul shall weep in secret places for *your* pride; and ¹mine eye shall weep sore, and run down with tears, because the Lord's flock is carried away captive. **18** Say unto ^mthe king and to the queen, Humble yourselves, sit down: for your ⁴principalities shall come down, *even* the crown of your glory. **19** The cities of the south shall be shut up, and none shall open *them*: Judah shall be carried away captive all of it, it shall be wholly carried away captive. **20** Lift up your eyes, and behold them ²that come from the north: where *is* the flock *that* was given thee, thy beautiful flock? **21** What wilt thou say when he shall ⁵punish thee? for thou hast taught them *to be* captains, and as chief over thee: shall not ⁶sorrows take thee, as a woman in travail?

22 And if thou say in thine heart,

¹ Chap. 9. 1; 14. 17; Lam. 1. 2, 16; 2. 18. — ^m See 2 Kings 24. 12; chap. 22. 26. — ⁴ Or, *head-tires*. — ⁿ Chap. 6. 22. — ⁵ Heb. *visit upon*. — ⁶ Chap. 6. 24. — ^p Chap. 5. 19; 16. 10. — ^q Isa. 3. 17; 47. 2, 3; verse 26; Ezek. 16. 37-39; Nah. 3. 5. — ⁶ Or, *shall be violently taken*

For this is not the twilight which grows into day, but that which goes out in utter darkness.

17. My soul shall weep in secret places—Most characteristic language! In it how clearly do we see reflected the heart of this man of God! A true "jeremiad" is not so much the language of gloom and hopelessness as of tenderness and earnest remonstrance. "Secret places" may, perhaps, suggest the present enforced privacy of the prophet.

18. Queen—Rather, *queen-mother*. It seems to have been the custom among many Oriental peoples for the king's mother to take precedence of his wife. **Principalities**—The marginal reading is better, *your head-tires*, *even the crown of your glory, shall come down*.

19. Cities of the south—The region south of Jerusalem. **Shut up**—Not necessarily by siege, nor by ruins which shall block up the entrances, but by being uninhabited.

20. Lift up—The verb is feminine, indicating Jerusalem as the object of address. **The flock** are the dependent cities lying about her.

21. When he shall punish thee—This verse should read: *What wilt*

Wherefore come these things upon me? For the greatness of thine iniquity are ⁹thy skirts discovered, and thy heels ⁶made bare. **23** Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? *then* may ye also do good, that are ⁷accustomed to do evil. **24** Therefore will I scatter them ⁸as the stubble that passeth away by the wind of the wilderness. **25** ⁵This *is* thy lot, the portion of thy measures from me, saith the Lord; because thou hast forgotten me, and trusted in ¹falsehood. **26** Therefore ⁴will I discover thy skirts upon thy face, that thy shame may appear. **27** I have seen thine adulteries, and thy ³neighings, the lewdness of thy whoredom, and thine abominations ²on the hills in the fields. Woe unto thee, O Jerusalem! wilt thou not be made clean? ⁸when shall it once be?

away. — ⁷ Heb. *taught*. — ^r Psa. 1. 4; Hosea 13. 3. — ^s Job 20. 29; Psa. 11. 6. — ^t Chap. 10. 14. — ^u Verse 22; Lam. 1. 8; Ezek. 16. 37; 23. 29; Hosea 2. 10. — ^v Chap. 5. 8. — ^w Isa. 65. 7; chap. 2. 20; 3. 2, 5; Ezek. 6. 13. — ⁸ Heb. *after when yet?*

thou (Jerusalem) say if he (Jehovah) shall set over thee, for a head, those whom thou accustomed to be thy bosom friends? The word "punish," in our version, is quite incorrect. The thought is: You cannot complain of the divinely appointed visitation of these heathen enemies, since you have courted their intimacy.

22. Skirts discovered—Lifted so as to expose the person, expressive of ignominy and shame. **Heels made bare**—Driven into exile as captives and slaves, barefoot and with violence.

23. The hopelessness of Judah's case consists in the fact that her sin has become her nature. Her momentum in evil is practically resistless. But with God all things are possible.

24. Stubble—The broken straw which has to be separated from the wheat after the threshing.

25-27. A fearfully vivid statement of the apostasy and idolatry of the people, especially as to the unclean and debasing rites of that idolatry.

CHAPTER XIV.

The following group of discourses includes four chapters. There is no reason for considering these as one discourse delivered on a particular

CHAPTER XIV.

THE word of the LORD that came to Jeremiah concerning ¹the dearth. **2** Judah mourneth, and ^athe gates thereof languish; they are ^bblack unto the ground; and ^cthe cry of Jerusalem is gone up. **3** And their nobles have sent their little ones to the waters: they came to the pits, and found no water: they returned with their vessels empty; they were ^dashamed and confounded,

¹ Heb. *the words of the dearths*, or, *restraints*.—^a Isa. 3. 26.—^b Chap. 8. 21.

occasion, but rather as a summary of the prophet's teaching at a certain period which is characterized as the period of "the drought." It commences with a description of the physical calamity, (xiv, 2-6,) which is followed by the prophet's prayer in the people's behalf, (xiv, 7-9, 19-22.) But this prayer, twice repeated, is twice refused, (xiv, 10-18, and xv, 1-9,) and threats of coming calamities are reiterated. Then the prophet complains of the persecution he suffers, and is corrected and comforted, (xv, 10-21,) and instructed how, as the servant of Jehovah, he should conduct himself among the people thus sinning and suffering. (Chap. xvi, 1-xvii, 4.) Finally, we have a general view of the sources of the evil, and a prayer of the prophet for safety and success among the people.

The date of these discourses we have no certain means of fixing; but it would seem that Jeremiah had become well known in his official character, (xv, 16;) that he had become the object of scorn and opposition, (xv, 10;) and that he was himself disappointed at his own ill-success. It seems, then, not unreasonable to assign them to the reign of Jehoiakim, but before that memorable fourth year of his reign in which the first deportation of captives to Babylon occurred, and from which the seventy years' captivity is dated.

THE DROUGHT, 1-6.

1. The word of the Lord—The title, not only of the section immediately following, but of the whole four chapters to chap. xviii. **Dearth**—Better, *drought*. The original word is in the plural, either to express emphasis or to indicate a succession of droughts.

^eand covered their heads. **4** Because the ground is chapped, for there was no rain in the earth, the ploughmen were ashamed, they covered their heads. **5** Yea, the hind also calved in the field, and forsook it, because there was no grass. **6** And ^fthe wild asses did stand in the high places, they snuffed up the wind like dragons; their eyes did fail, because *there was no grass*.

7 O LORD, though our iniquities tes-

^c See 1 Sam. 5. 12.—^d Psa. 40. 14.—^e 2 Sam. 15. 30.—^f Chap. 24.

2. Judah mourneth—The whole description is vigorous and graphic, and shows the unsurpassed power of Jeremiah in this respect. Country and city, the noble and the peasant, the husbandman and his parched fields, the burnt-up pastures, the waterless wells, and the starving flocks, all have a place in this vivid picture. **The gates**—By metonymy for cities. They are the places where the people meet, and so the places where any popular feeling manifests itself. **They are black**—That is, the people, who are in dark mourning attire, are seated on the ground in gloom and despair.

3. Little ones—Not children, but the common people, in contrast with the *nobles*—the great ones. The word is used besides only in chap. xviii, 4. **Pits**—Cisterns. **Covered their heads**—"Covering the head is a token of deep grief turned in upon itself. See 2 Sam. xv, 30; xix, 5."—*Keil*.

4. Chapped—Rather, *dismayed*, or *confounded*. The Hebrew, more frequently than western languages, speaks of inanimate things as animate. **The earth**—Rather, *the land*.

5. The hind—Celebrated by the ancients as tenderly caring for her young; hence giving special emphasis.

6. The wild asses stand upon the **high places** where they dwell, and gasp for air like the *jackals*, not *dragons*. These keen-sighted animals look for any green herb in vain.

THE PROPHET'S PRAYER, 7-9, 19-22.

7. Thus far the historical background of the picture: now we have the prophet's prayer in the people's behalf. All petitions for mercy must,

tify against us, do thou *it* * for thy name's sake: for our backslidings are many; we have sinned against thee. 8 ^a O the hope of Israel, the Saviour thereof in time of trouble, why shouldst thou be as a stranger in the land, and as a way-faring man *that* turneth aside to tarry for a night? 9 Why shouldst thou be as a man astonished, as a mighty man ¹ *that* cannot save? yet thou, O Lord, ² *art* in the midst of us, and ² we are called by thy name; leave us not.

10 Thus saith the Lord unto this people, ¹ Thus have they loved to wan-

der, they have not refrained their feet, therefore the Lord doth not accept them; ^m he will now remember their iniquity, and visit their sins. 11 Then said the Lord unto me, ⁿ Pray not for this people for *their* good. 12 ^o When they fast, I will not hear their cry; and ^p when they offer burnt offering and an oblation, I will not accept them: but ^q I will consume them by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence.

13 ^r Then said I, Ah, Lord God! behold, the prophets say unto them, Ye shall not see the sword, neither shall ye

^o Psa. 25. 11.—^k Chap. 17. 13.—ⁱ Isa. 59. 1.
—^k Exod. 29. 45, 46; Lev. 26. 11, 12.—² Heb.
thy name is called upon us, Dan. 9. 18, 19.—
^l See chap. 2. 23-25.—^m Hosea 8. 13; 9. 9.

ⁿ Exod. 32. 10; chap. 7. 16; 11. 14.—^o Prov.
1. 28; Isa. 1. 15; 58. 3; chap. 11. 11; Ezek. 8. 18;
Micah 3. 4; Zech. 7. 13.—^p Chap. 6. 20; 7. 21,
22.—^q Chap. 9. 16.—^r Chap. 4. 10.

in fact if not in form, open with confession; and so does this. **Thy**

name's sake—Namely, Jehovah, which implies that he is the Friend and Saviour of his people. See Exod. xxxiv. 6. This name is the one all-comprehending promise of good to his people. And so the prayer is, Do not belie thine own name and the hope of thy people, but interfere for our relief.

8. **Why... a stranger**, etc. Why art thou, our Hope and Saviour, but as a mere casual sojourner who feels no share in the weal and woe of the dwellers in the land? Alas, how often do God's people make him a transient guest rather than a permanent resident! We invite him to sojourn, and not to abide. We call him to *our* homes, but do not ask him to make them *his* home. But in the time of our trouble this is our sad complaint, that he has taken us at our word. **Wayfaring man that turneth aside**—Rather, *as a traveller who pitches (his tent) for the night*; in allusion to what was true then, as it is now in this land, that travellers must carry their own tents with them.

9. **Astonished**—The original occurs only here. The meaning is thought to be, *taken by surprise*; the conception being of one who has lost his presence of mind and is consequently without power. The Septuagint seems to be based on a different reading, and gives "slumbering." **Yet thou, O Lord**, etc.—How pathetic and how genuine are these words of prayer.

Leave us not—Lay us not down, let us not sink.

THE PROPHET'S PRAYER REFUSED, 10-18.

10. In verses 10-18 we have Jehovah's answer, once, however, interrupted by the prophet's additional pleading, (verse 13.) This answer is a full refusal of the prayer, and a vindication of such refusal. **Thus have they loved to wander**—And so their punishment answers to their sin, for Jehovah has estranged himself from them. **Therefore the Lord**, etc.—Quoted from Hos. viii. 13.

12. **I will not hear... not accept**—Because their prayers were not real or not reasonable. In the case of many they were merely selfish cryings out against the consequences of sin rather than the sin itself; and in the case of others, though penitence was genuine, it came too late to avert the temporal calamity.

13. **Then said I**—Another clamorous outburst of prayer. As if the prophet would leave nothing unsaid that might serve to put the case into a stronger light. The plea he now makes is important and relevant. The people are deceived and deluded. The false prophets at this time, even more than in that of Micah, (Mic. iii. 5, 11,) promise peace. This would have been a more potent plea were it not true, as had been already charged, (chap. v. 31,) "My people love to have it so."

have famine; but I will give you ³assured peace in this place. **14** Then the LORD said unto me, 'The prophets prophesy lies in my name: 'I sent them not, neither have I commanded them, neither spake unto them: they prophesy unto you a false vision and divination, and a thing of naught, and the deceit of their heart. **15** Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning the prophets that prophesy in my name, and I sent them not, ^ayet they say, Sword and famine shall not be in this land: By sword and famine shall those prophets be consumed. **16** And the people to whom they prophesy shall be cast out in the streets of Jerusalem, because of the famine and the sword; ^band they shall have none to bury them, them, their wives, nor their sons, nor their daughters: for I will pour their wickedness upon them.

17 Therefore thou shalt say this word unto them; ^cLet mine eyes run down with tears night and day, and let them not cease: ^dfor the virgin daughter of

my people is broken with a great breach, with a very grievous blow. **18** If I go forth into ^ethe field, then behold the slain with the sword! and if I enter into the city, then behold them that are sick with famine!—yea, both the prophet and the priest ^fgo about into a land that they know not. **19** ^gHast thou utterly rejected Judah? hath thy soul loathed Zion? why hast thou smitten us, and ^hthere is no healing for us? ⁱwe looked for peace, and ^jthere is no good; and for the time of healing, and behold trouble! **20** We acknowledge, O LORD, our wickedness, and the iniquity of our fathers: for ^kwe have sinned against thee. **21** Do not abhor ^lus, for thy name's sake; do not disgrace the throne of thy glory: ^mremember, break not thy covenant with us. **22** ⁿAre there any among ^othe vanities of the Gentiles that can cause rain? or can the heavens give showers? ^pArt not thou he, O LORD our God? therefore we will wait upon thee: for thou hast made all these things.

³ Heb. *peace of truth*.—^a Chap. 27, 10.—^t Chap. 23, 21; 27, 15; 29, 8, 9.—^u Chap. 5, 12, 13.—^v Psa. 79, 3.—^w Chap. 9, 1; 13, 17; Lam. 1, 16; 2, 18.—^x Chap. 8, 21.—^y Ezek. 7, 15.—**40**, *make merchandise against a land, and*

men acknowledge it not, chap. 5, 31.—^z Lam. 5, 22.—^a Chap. 15, 18.—^b Chap. 8, 15.—^c Psa. 106, 6; Dan. 9, 8.—^d Psa. 74, 2, 20; 106, 45.—^e Zech. 10, 1, 2.—^f Dent. 32, 21.—^g Psa. 135, 7; 147, 8; Isa. 30, 23; chap. 5, 24; 10, 13.

14. The prophets prophesy lies—The plea is not admitted. This false prophesying was itself the outgrowth of deeper apostasy and rebellion. It is not the cause, but only one of the forms, of the evil.

15, 16. I sent them not—A solemn reiteration of God's purpose to execute his own truth as against all assurances to the contrary. The chariot-wheels of Jehovah's purposes shall roll on, even though they roll in fire. **I will pour their wickedness upon them**—It is the animus of wickedness to destroy all good and precious things, even God himself; hence this is the direst of threats.

17. Thou shalt say this word—But no message for the people follows. Hence, some would connect this clause with that which precedes, making it equivalent to *in this manner hath God spoken*. But this is unnecessary, and is opposed to the invariable usage of this formula, which always looks forward and never backward. The true explanation is this: God's message in this instance is Jeremiah's pungent and perpetual grief.

That which leads him to weep day and night ought certainly to alarm them.

18. Prophet and the priest—These stays of the people's faith, the fountains of influence and objects of trust, will themselves go into exile.

19-21. Do not abhor us—Again the prophet turns in still more importunate pleading to God. His burdened spirit pours out more impassioned supplications. The nervous sentences, but imperfectly represented in our version, show his deep feeling.

22. Vanities of the Gentiles—Most pathetically does the prayer culminate in this—that God would not leave his people to the powerless and worthless, but still most debasing, deities of the Gentiles.

CHAPTER XV.

JEREMIAH'S PRAYER REFUSED, 1-9.

Here again we have an example of unfortunate chapter division. The connexion between the last verses of the preceding chapter and the opening portion of the present chapter is most intimate. To break it by one of the great chapter divisions is mislead. g.

CHAPTER XV.

THEN said the LORD unto me, ^aThough ^bMoses and ^cSamuel stood before me, yet my mind could not be toward this people: cast them out of my sight, and let them go forth. **2** And it shall come to pass, if they say unto thee, Whither shall we go forth? then thou shalt tell them, Thus saith the LORD; ^dSuch as are for death, to death; and such as are for the sword, to the sword; and such as are for the famine, to the famine; and such as are for the captivity, to the captivity. **3** And I will ^eappoint over them four ^fkinds, saith the LORD: the sword to slay, and the dogs to tear, and ^gthe fowls of the heaven, and the beasts of the earth, to devour and destroy. **4** And ^hI will cause them to be ⁱremoved into all kingdoms of the earth, because of

^b Manasseh the son of Hezekiah king of Judah, for that which he did in Jerusalem. **5** For ^jwho shall have pity upon thee, O Jerusalem? or who shall bemoan thee? or who shall go aside ^kto ask how thou doest? **6** ^lThou hast forsaken me, saith the LORD, thou art ^mgone backward: therefore will I stretch out my hand against thee, and destroy thee; ⁿI am weary with repenting. **7** And I will fan them with a fan in the gates of the land: I will bereave them of ^ochildren, I will destroy my people, since ^pthey return not from their ways. **8** Their widows are increased to me above the sand of the seas: I have brought upon them ^qagainst the mother of the young men a spoiler at noonday: I have caused him to fall upon it suddenly, and terrors upon the city. **9** ^rShe that hath borne seven languisheth: she

^a Ezek. 14, 14, etc. — ^b Exod. 33, 11, 12; Psal. 99, 6. — ^c 1 Sam. 7, 9. — ^d Chap. 43, 11; Ezek. 5, 2, 12; Zech. 11, 9. — ^e Lev. 25, 16, etc. — ^f 1 Heb. families. — ^g Deut. 28, 26; chap. 7, 33. — ^h 2 Heb. I will give them for a removing. — ⁱ Deut. 28, 25; chap. 24, 9; Ezek. 23, 46. — ^j 2 Kings 21, 11, etc.; 23, 26; 24, 3, 4.

^k Isa. 51, 19. — ^l 3 Heb. to ask of thy peace. — ^m Chap. 2, 13. — ⁿ Chap. 7, 24. — ^o In Hosea 13, 14. — ^p Or, whatsoever is dear. — ^q In Hosea 9, 13; chap. 5, 3; Amos 4, 10, 11. — ^r Or, against the mother city a young man spoiling, etc., or, against the mother and the young men. — ^s 1 Sam. 2, 5.

In the concluding portion of the preceding chapter the prophet's prayer is urgent and importunate; here we have a still more emphatic refusal.

1. Though Moses and Samuel—By their intercessions they had repeatedly saved the people from impending danger, (Exod. xxxii, 11–14; xvii, 11; Num. xiv, 13, etc.; 1 Sam. vii, 9; xii, 17; Psal. xcix, 4,) but now even such holy men as these would not succeed. **Cast them out of my sight**—As if they had come along with their representative, the prophet, and were waiting without while he had gone into the holy place to plead for them.

2. If they ask where they are to go, Jeremiah is to say: *To their fate.* And the choice will be, indeed, among grim alternatives—**death, sword, famine, and captivity.**

3. Four kinds—One to kill, the rest to tear and mutilate the dead.

4. Removed—Rather, *a terror.* Fürst, Nägelsbach, Keil, Syriac, render it *maltreated.* **Manasseh**—See 2 Kings xxi, 1–16. The name of the pious and illustrious father sets off with terrible emphasis that of his godless and unworthy son. Though Manasseh lived a hundred years be-

fore this, the evil consequences of his wicked reign were still extant.

5. Who shall have pity, etc.—Who if not Jeremiah? In rejecting him the people were sacrificing their last friend influential with God. How like to the after conduct of descendants of this very people in crucifying the Son of God.

6. Forsaken—The original is still stronger—*rejected.*

7. Will fan, etc.—The verb is a preterite used prophetically. **Gates of the land—**Frequently used in the sense of cities, but here in the more ordinary sense of places of ingress and egress. The sense of the verse is: With my winnowing shovel I will drive the people out of the land.

8, 9. This destruction is so sweeping that **widows are increased... above the sand of the seas... mother of the young men—**Literally, *the young man*, the word which is so rendered meaning *young warrior*. The picked warriors have fallen; so that though she has **borne seven** sons she is now defenceless against the spoiler. **Noonday—**When one least looks for an attack. **Caused him to fall upon it—**Rather, *I caused to fall upon her*

hath given up the ghost; ^pher sun is gone down while *it was yet day*: she hath been ashamed and confounded: and the residue of them will I deliver to the sword before their enemies, saith the LORD.

10 ^a Woe is me, my mother, that thou hast borne me a man of strife and a man of contention to the whole earth! I have

^p Amos 8. 9. — ^q Job 3. 1, etc.; chapter 20. 14.

(namely, the mother of the young men) *anguish and terrors*. **Sun is gone down while... yet day**—Betokening violence and calamity.

THE PROPHET IS CORRECTED AND COMFORTED, 10-21.

10. Woe is me—Here begins the complaint of the prophet and the answer of Jehovah, in a conversation which constitutes the remainder of the chapter. "Woe is me," **my mother!** The deep pathos of this language shows that it was no light burden of duty which Jeremiah was bearing. The language suggests that of Job, in which he cursed the day of his birth, (iii, 3, etc.) but is entirely different in spirit. What gives Jeremiah such depth of sorrow is, not only the fate of the commonwealth, but also his experience of personal loneliness, shut out as he was from the sympathy of his countrymen. **A man of strife**—A prophet of evil omen. **I have neither lent**, etc.—So it seems that in ancient as well as modern times the relations of moneylender and borrower were fruitful of strife.

11. It shall be well with thy remnant—The passage is exceedingly difficult. This difficulty pressed upon the Jews themselves, for the *keri* is manifestly a struggle for relief. Many translations have been given, for the most important of which see the critical note of Nägelsbach *in loc.* The following deserve mention: "I afflict thee for thy good," Gesenius, Meyer, Nägelsbach. "I will strengthen thee for good," Ewald, Keil. "I will loose thee for good," Fürst, Rosenmüller. Of these the last is preferable, both on the score of etymology and sense, combining, as it does, substantially

neither lent on usury, nor men have lent to me on usury; *yet* every one of them doth curse me. **11** The LORD said, Verily it shall be well with thy remnant; verily ^a I will cause ^r the enemy to entreat thee *well* in the time of evil and in the time of affliction. **12** Shall iron break the northern iron and the steel? **13** Thy substance and thy treasures will I give

⁶ Or, *I will entreat the enemy for thee.*—^r Chap. 39. 11, 12; 40. 4, 5.

both the *kethil* and *keri*. The word occurs elsewhere only in Job xxxvii, 3, where it applies to the lightning, and is rendered in the English version "directeth," but probably should be translated *hath set loose*. **To entreat thee well**—Rather, *to supplicate thee*, a prophecy which was literally fulfilled. See xxi, 1, etc.; xxxvii, 3; xxxviii, 14, etc.; xliii, 2.

12. Steel—Rather, *brass*. Making this change, the Authorized Version, as to words, faithfully represents the original: but as to the meaning there have been different opinions. Taking the construction of the English Version, the question is: Can one kind of iron break another? Can the iron of Jeremiah's intercession break the iron of Jehovah's purpose to send his people into exile? But this does not satisfactorily explain the phrase **northern iron**. To refer the epithet "northern" to Jehovah's purpose to send his people into the north country is harsh in the extreme, not to say puerile. Better is it to regard **northern iron** as a mere repetition for the purpose of identification of the term **iron**, and **break** as intransitive. The meaning, then, will be: *Shall iron break—northern iron and brass?* Is there any probability or possibility that the power of the north country will break, any more than that iron itself will break?

13, 14. These verses are repeated in xvii, 3-4. **Thy substance**—Jeremiah's, as representing the people. The general meaning of the verses last preceding is substantially as follows: God will take care of his servant, and will give him deliverance from the strait place in which he now is, and will even cause the enemy to suppli-

to the "spoil without price, and *that* for all thy sins, even in all thy borders. **14** And I will make *thee* to pass with thine enemies 'into a land *which* thou knowest not: for a "fire is kindled in mine anger, *which* shall burn upon you.

15 O LORD, "thou knowest: remember me, and visit me, and "revenge me of my persecutors; take me not away in thy longsuffering: know that "for thy sake I have suffered rebuke. **16** Thy words were found, and I did "eat them; and "thy word was unto me the joy and

^s Psa. 41. 12; chap. 17. 3. —^t Chap. 16. 13; 17. 4. —^v Deut. 32. 22. —^v Chap. 12. 3. —^w Chap. 11. 20; 24. 12. —^x Psa. 69. 7. —^y Ezek. 3. 1, 3; Rev. 10. 9, 10. —^z Job 23. 12; Psa. 119. 72, 111.

cate him. (Verse 11.) As one proof of this, he mentions the improbability that the Chaldean power will relent, (verse 12,) and so the prophetic character of Jeremiah will be vindicated by his words coming fearfully true. And still further extending the thought, he says (verse 13) that the substance of the people is to be cast away as worthless, because of their sins.

15. Remember me, etc.—Here we have another phase of Jeremiah's complaint, for nothing is so eloquent or so exhaustless as the heart. It contains two elements: 1) The hard lot of having to predict the ruin of his country. 2) His own personal trials in executing this commission. **Revenge me**—In judging of such words we must not leave out of view the fact that the speaker has a consciousness of being in some eminent and peculiar sense the embodiment of God's cause, and that the honour of that cause is bound up with his own personal fate. So, for instance, was it with Jonah in his complaint at the sparing of Nineveh. His bitter grief was not a merely low and selfish regard for his reputation as a prophet; were it so, he were a monster and not a man. But, in addition to any sense of personal defeat and dishonour he may have experienced, there was a shock to his faith, and a fear that the cause of Israel's God had come to dishonour before his enemies. We are not, then, to interpret these words as a vindictive cry for revenge, but a prayer for vindication as a prophet of

rejoicing of mine heart: for "I am called by thy name, O LORD God of hosts.

17 "I sat not in the assembly of the mockers, nor rejoiced; I sat alone because of thy hand: for thou hast filled me with indignation. **18** Why is my "pain perpetual, and my wound incurable, *which* refuseth to be healed? wilt thou be altogether unto me "as a liar, and "as waters that "fail?

19 Therefore thus saith the LORD, "If thou return, then will I bring thee again, and thou shalt "stand before me: and if

⁷ Heb. *thy name is called upon me.* —^a Psa. 1. 1; 26. 4, 5. —^b Chap. 30. 15. —^c See chap. 1. 18, 19. —^d Job 6. 15, etc. —^e Heb. *be not sure.* —^f Zech. 3. 7. —^g Verse 1.

God. **In thy longsuffering**—Namely, that which spares the wicked. The prophet had come to feel that the issue was so joined, that to spare the wicked would be to destroy him who by God's command had predicted their downfall. And so he bas's his prayer upon this very longsuffering. He prays that He who deals so leniently with his enemies may mercifully consider his own servant.

16. I did eat them—Compare Ezek. ii, 9; iii, 3; Rev. x, 9-10. The meaning here is: I received them with avidity; they became incorporated into my being, and filled me with joy and strength. Trying, indeed, is the particular duty assigned me, but above it all is the blessed fact, that I belong to God and am executing his will.

17. Assembly of the mockers—Literally, *laughers*. Those that make merry. Though young when called, yet he had led not a frivolous but a serious life. **Because of thy hand**—Which had lifted him into the realm of prophetic vision.

18. Pain perpetual—Implying that he had been long in the prophetic office. **A liar**—Rather, *a deceptive torrent*, that dries up in the season of drought and so disappoints hope. See Job vi, 15; Micah i, 16. The phrase **waters that fail** is expegetical.

19. If thou return—That is, from thy doubtings and complaints. This is Jehovah's answer to Jeremiah's complaint. **Again**—The whole clause should read: *Then will I cause thee again to stand before me*: the first of the two verbs joined by *and* being ad-

thou "take forth the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as my mouth: let them return unto thee; but return not thou unto them. **20** And I will make thee unto this people a fenced brazen wall: and they shall fight against thee, but they shall not prevail against thee: for I am with thee to save thee and to deliver thee, saith the LORD. **21** And I will deliver thee out of the hand of the wicked, and I will redeem thee out of the hand of the terrible.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE word of the LORD came also unto me, saying, **2** Thou shalt not take thee a wife, neither shalt thou have sons nor daughters in this place. **3** For thus saith the LORD concerning the sons and concerning the daughters that are born in this place, and concerning their

g Ezek. 22, 26; 44, 23.—*h* Chap. 1, 18; 6, 27.
i Chap. 20, 11, 12.—*a* Chap. 15, 2.—*b* Chap. 22, 18, 19; 23, 34.—*c* Psa. 83, 10; chap. 8, 2;
 9, 22.—*d* Psa. 79, 2; chap. 7, 33; 34, 20.—
e Ezek. 24, 17, 22, 23.

verbal, according to a very common Hebrew idiom. This language must have been a poignant reproof to the prophet's sensitive spirit. While he is in the very act of recounting his faithfulness, God reproves him in language which implies unfaithfulness.

20, 21. These verses contain an amplified repetition of the promise given at the very outset of his ministry, chap. i, 18, 19.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE PROPHET'S DUTY IN VIEW OF THE COMING JUDGMENT, 1-9.

Some prefer to separate this chapter and the next from the one immediately preceding, and class them as a distinct prophecy. The general drift, however, is manifestly the same, and hence it seems better to throw them into the same group. But as we have here only a summary of what may have been originally many distinct discourses, it is proper to recognise a distinct individuality in the various portions.

In these chapters the fate of the people is set forth in, if possible, more impressive terms. Death is universal. The land is a desert. Life is no longer life. Even its simplest and most natural manifestations are suppressed.

mothers that bare them, and concerning their fathers that begat them in this land; **4** They shall die of "grievous deaths; they shall not ^bbe lamented; neither shall they be buried; but they shall be ^cas dung upon the face of the earth; and they shall be consumed by the sword, and by famine; and their ^dcarcasses shall be meat for the fowls of heaven, and for the beasts of the earth. **5** For thus saith the LORD, ^eEnter not into the house of ^fmourning, neither go to lament nor bemoan them: for I have taken away my peace from this people, saith the LORD, *even* lovingkindness and mercies. **6** Both the great and the small shall die in this land: they shall not be buried, ^gneither shall *men* lament for them, nor ^hcut themselves, nor ⁱmake themselves bald for them: **7** Neither shall *men* ^jtear themselves for

1 Or, *mourning feast*.—*f* Chap. 22, 18.—
g Lev. 19, 28; Deut. 14, 1; chap. 41, 5; 47, 5.
h Isa. 22, 12; chap. 7, 29.—*2* Or, *break bread for them*, as Ezek. 24, 17; Hosea 9, 4; see Deut. 26, 14; Job 42, 11.

2. Not take thee a wife—Marriage was in the general obligatory, and this prohibition was clearly exceptional. So far, then, from favouring clerical celibacy the bearing of the passage is distinctly against it. With this prohibition should be compared 1 Cor. vii, 26, and Ezek. xxiv, 15-27. This command is enforced by the universal catastrophe which was before the people.

4. Grievous deaths—Literally, *deaths of sicknesses*; suggesting the manifold forms which death takes in war and famine.

5. House of mourning—Literally, *outcry*; which may be of joy, as the Vulgate actually translates in this place, or of wailing, which only harmonizes with the rest of the passage. **Peace . . . lovingkindness** (better, *grace*) . . . **mercies**—There is here threatened just the opposite of the apostolic benediction. No more portentous threat could be uttered than the taking away of "grace, mercy, and peace."

6. Nor cut themselves . . . make themselves bald—Forms of mourning strictly forbidden in the law, (see Lev. xix, 28; xxi, 5; Deut. xiv, 1,) but, as it would seem, much practised. See vii, 29; xli, 5; Isa. xxii, 12; Ezek. vii, 18, etc., etc.

7. Neither . . . tear themselves—

them in mourning, to comfort them for the dead; neither shall *men* give them the cup of consolation to ¹ drink for their father or for their mother. **8** Thou shalt not also go into the house of feasting, to sit with them to eat and to drink. **9** For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, ² I will cause to cease out of this place in your eyes, and in your days, the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride.

10 And it shall come to pass, when thou shalt show this people all these words, and they shall say unto thee, ³ Wherefore hath the LORD pronounced all this great evil against us? or what is our iniquity? or what *is* our sin that we have committed against the LORD our God? **11** Then shalt thou say unto them, ⁴ Because your fathers have forsaken me, saith the LORD, and have walked after other gods, and have served them, and have worshipped them, and have forsaken me, and have

¹ Prov. 31. 6, 7.—² Isa. 24. 7, 8; chap. 7. 34; 25. 10; Ezek. 26. 13; Hosea 2. 11; Rev. 18. 23. —
³ Deut. 29. 24; chap. 5. 19; 13. 22; 22. 8. —
⁴ Deut. 29. 25; chap. 23. 9.—⁵ Chap. 7. 26.

Better, as the margin translates, *break bread*, fitly joined here with the **cup of consolation**. The allusion is to a custom of going to the home of a bereaved family to comfort them and to urge them to take necessary sustenance. See 2 Samuel iii, 35; xii, 16, etc.

8. Feasting—Literally, *drinking*: showing that even in very ancient times drinking practices were prominent in such assemblies.

9. Cause to cease—All glad and joyous notes shall have died out of the psalm of human life. Only the voices of misery and despair, wailing and lamentation, remain.

THE CAUSE OF THE COMING JUDGMENT, 10-15.

10-13. Wherefore hath, etc.—God's ways need to be explained. Even with the utmost care it is not always possible to prevent wrong interpretations. Hence, when the people, by their inquiries, made either in complaint or with desire to know the truth, shall open the way, the prophet is commanded to explain God's dealings toward them. God's real purpose in

not kept my law; **12** And ye have done ⁵ worse than your fathers; for, behold, ⁶ ye walk every one after the ⁷ imagination of his evil heart, that they may not hearken unto me: **13** ⁸ Therefore will I cast you out of this land ⁹ into a land that ye know not, *neither* ye nor your fathers; and there shall ye serve other gods day and night; where I will not show you favour.

14 Therefore, behold, the ¹⁰ days come, saith the LORD, that it shall no more be said, The LORD liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; **15** But, The LORD liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither he had driven them: and ¹¹ I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers.

16 Behold, I will send for many ¹² fishers, saith the LORD, and they shall fish them; and after will I send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill,

⁵ Chap. 13. 10. — ⁶ Or, *stubbornness*. —
⁷ Deut. 4. 26-28; 28. 36, 63-65. — ⁸ Chap. 15. 14. —
⁹ Isa. 43. 18; chap. 23. 7, 8. — ¹⁰ Chap. 24. 6; 30. 3; 32. 37. — ¹¹ Amos 4. 2; Hab. 1. 15.

all things pertaining to this universe is a moral one. Take out this element from man's history, and all would be a hopeless enigma. **Imagination**—Rather, *stubbornness*. **Land that ye know not**—Not geographical ignorance is meant, but lack of experience. They know it not, because they have not been there.

14, 15. From the land of the north—A ray of light falls suddenly on the darkness, but only to make it more intense and awful. For the greatness of the deliverance measures the greatness of the calamity. A redemption which shall so rise up as to shut off from view even the birth deliverances of the nation implies an impending evil the memory of which would displace that of the Egyptian bondage.

SOME DETAILS OF THE EXILE, 16-21.

16. Fishers...hunters—They shall be treated like hunted animals. Means adapted to their capture shall be employed. The "fishers" will gather into their nets all that can be so reached, and then the "hunters" will pursue the fugitives on the mountains, and in the caves and ravines.

and out of the holes of the rocks. **17** For mine ^aeyes are upon all their ways: they are not hid from my face, neither is their iniquity hid from mine eyes. **18** And first I will recompense their iniquity and their sin ^adouble; because ^athey have defiled my land, they have filled mine inheritance with the carcasses of their detestable and abominable things. **19** O LORD, ^amy strength, and my fortress, and ^amy refuge in the day of affliction, the Gentiles shall come unto thee from the ends of the earth, and shall say, Surely our fathers have inherited lies, vanity, and

things ^awherein *there is* no profit. **20** Shall a man make gods unto himself, and ^athey are no gods? **21** Therefore, behold, I will this once cause them to know, I will cause them to know mine hand and my might; and they shall know that ^amy name is ^aThe Lord.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE sin of Judah *is* written with a ^apen of iron, and with the ^apoint of a diamond: *it is* ^bgraven upon the table of their heart, and upon the horns of your altars; **2** Whilst their children remember their altars and their ^agroves

^s Job 34. 21; Prov. 5. 21; 15. 3; chap. 32. 19.—^t Isa. 40. 2; chap. 17. 18.—^u Ezek. 43. 7, 9.—^v Psa. 18. 2.—^w Chap. 17. 17.—^x Isa. 44. 10; chap. 2. 11; 10. 5.—^y Isa. 37. 19; chap. 2. 11; Gal. 4. 8.

18. And first—Namely, before the return already mentioned. **Double**—Various interpretations have been given of this. 1) I will recompense double—that is, two times—in allusion to the Babylonian and Roman captivities. 2) I will recompense their former iniquities and the repetition of them. 3) Amply and fully. Compare Isa. xl, 2; Job xi, 16; chap. xvii, 18. This is the only satisfactory explanation.

19. Lord, my strength... fortress... refuge—Mark the expressiveness of these epithets for a lone, weak, unprotected man. Out of the prophet's own need comes a more vivid realization of God. In this concluding portion of the chapter we have Jeremiah's prophetic prayer for the heathen, and God's answer thereto. So vain and so corrupt is idolatry that even the heathen themselves shall repudiate their foul inheritance.

21. This once—There is here most significant and portentous emphasis. The intimation is, that they were on the eve of such a signal display of God's power as to compel, even from the heathen, the confession that his name is **Jehovah**.

CHAPTER XVII.

JUDAH'S SIN INEFFACEABLY RECORDED, 1-4.

1. Sin of Judah—Namely, that very sin set forth in the previous chapter, of which even the Gentiles would become ashamed. Origen and Isidore

^z Exod. 15. 3; chap. 33. 2; Amos 5. 8.—⁴ Or, **JEHOVAH**, Psa. 83. 18.—^a Job 19. 24.—¹ Heb. *nail*.—^b Prov. 3. 3; 2 Cor. 3. 3.—^c Judg. 3. 7; 2 Chron. 24. 13; 33. 3, 19; Isa. 1. 29; 17. 8; chap. 2. 20.

understood by "Judah," here, Judas Iscariot! **Pen of iron**—A sharp-pointed iron stylus, or chisel, used for making inscriptions on tables of wood or stone. Exod. xxxii, 16; Job xix, 24. Of course when this was used it was for the purpose of graving it very deeply, so that it could not be easily effaced. **Point of a diamond**—In Ezek. iii, 9, and Ezek. vii, 12, the original of diamond is rendered *adamant*; in every other place it is translated *thorn*. The sense here is correctly given. Pliny says the ancients were acquainted with the cutting powers of the diamond. **Table of their heart... horns of your altars**—The inward seat of sin and its outward expression. God would have his law written on their hearts, but they had written sin instead. The "altars" here are the idolatrous altars which the Jews had set up to Baalim. True, Josiah had destroyed these; but doubtless many of them had been rebuilt and were now standing as the visible proof of Israel's idolatry, answering to the writing on their hearts. The change of person—**their heart... your altars**—is such as is common, especially with Jeremiah, and serves to charge home their guilt more directly and personally.

2. Whilst their children remember, etc.—Two senses of this verse have been given: 1) That of the common Version, but the first word should be translated "as." 2) That of Keil—*As their children, they remember their*

by the green trees upon the high hills. **3** O my mountain in the field, ^aI will give thy substance and all thy treasures to the spoil, and thy high places for sin, throughout all thy borders. **4** And thou, even ^bthyself, shalt discontinue from thine heritage that I gave thee; and I will cause thee to serve thine enemies in ^cthe land which thou knowest not: for ^dye have kindled a fire in mine anger, which shall burn for ever.

5 Thus saith the LORD; ^e"Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh ^fflesh his arm, and whose heart de-

^d Chap. 15. 13. — ² Heb. *in thyself*. — ^e Chap. 16. 13. — ^f Chap. 15. 14. — ^g Isa. 30. 1, 2; 31. 1. — ^h See Isa. 31. 3. — ⁱ Chap. 48. 6.

altars, that is, as fondly. This is best. **Groves** — Rather, *their asherahs*: wooden images of Astarte, the female divinity answering to Baal. **By the green trees** — Literally, *upon the "green trees,"* the preposition being the same as that before **hills**. Some explain this difficulty by referring it back to the word "remember;" but this is far from satisfactory.

3. My mountain in the field — Jerusalem, or Zion. (See also xxi, 13, for another similar designation—"rock of the plain.") Keil and Nægelsbach construe it as an accusative co-ordinate with **substance**; others, as in the common version. The term "field" is a comprehensive designation of the land as cultivated, and hence kindred with **substance and treasures**. Zion is called a "mountain," both because of its physical elevation and its moral height as the throne and altar of the land.

4. Shalt discontinue — That is, be dispossessed of. **Even thyself** — By thine own fault, and by that only.

THE SOURCES OF RUIN, 5-13.

5. Cursed... the man — What follows is more general, but doubtless has specific reference to Jewish current history. It sets forth the curse of trusting in man; the blessedness of trusting in God; the deceitfulness of the human heart; and contains a prayer of the prophet for deliverance from his enemies.

6. Heath in the desert — The original of "heath" occurs besides only

parteth from the LORD. **6** For he shall be ¹like the heath in the desert, and ²shall not see when good cometh; but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, ³in a salt land and not inhabited. **7** ^mBlessed is the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is. **8** For he shall be ⁿas a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of ³drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.

■ The heart is deceitful above all

^k Job 20. 17. — ^l Deut. 29. 23. — ^m Psa. 2. 12; 34. 8; 123. 1; 146. 5; Prov. 16. 20; Isa. 30. 18. — ⁿ Job 8. 16; Psa. 1. 3. — ³ Or, *restraint*.

in Psalm cii, 17, where it is rendered "destitute" man. A similar word in a similar phrase occurs in chap. xlviii, 6, where it is also translated "heath." Fürst, Henderson, Robinson, De Wette, and all the older Versions, understand by the word in this place some sort of shrub, such as the juniper, heath, or tamarisk; but Gesenius, Nægelsbach, Keil, and many others, translate it "a destitute man," as in Psa. cii, 17. This falls in better with the verbs **see** and **inhabit**, but the former is more exactly antithetic to the figure in verse 8, and is to be preferred. **Salt land** — That is, *barren*. See Deut. xxix, 23; Job xxxix, 6; Psa. cvii, 34.

7, 8. Blessed... trusteth — The blessedness of trusting in God heightens by contrast the curse of trusting in man. Mark the particulars of this contrast. One is a solitary, worthless shrub; the other a tree. One is in the desert; the other by the water-courses. One shall not see when good cometh; the other shall not see when heat cometh. One inhabits parched, barren, uninhabited places; the other has a leaf always green, is unaffected by the year of drought, and does not leave off fruitbearing. **Shall not see** — Rather, *fear*. "See" comes from the marginal reading of the Masoretes, is opposed to the leading ancient Versions, and has nothing to commend it. **By the waters** — Literally, *water-courses*. The reference may be to natural or to artificial channels.

9. The heart is deceitful — The

things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? **10** I the Lord ° search the heart, I try the reins, ° even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.

11 As the partridge ⁴ sitteth on eggs, and hatcheth them not; so he that getteth riches, and not by right, ° shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end shall be ° a fool.

12 A glorious high throne from the beginning ^{is} the place of our sanctuary.

13 O Lord, ° the hope of Israel, ° all that forsake thee shall be ashamed, and

o 1 Sam. 16. 7: 1 Chron. 28. 9; Psa. 7. 9; 139. 23. 24; Prov. 17. 3; chap. 11. 20; 20. 12; Rom. 8. 27; Rev. 2. 23.—p Psa. 62. 12; chap. 32. 19; Rom. 2. 6.
—4 Or, gathereth young which she hath not brought forth.—q Psa. 55. 23.—r Luke 12. 20.

connexion is this: Man trusts in his fellowman in obedience to the natural impulses of his heart, and because he thinks him trustworthy; but “the heart is deceitful.” Our own impulses are crooked and perverse, and, for a similar reason, our fellowmen are untrustworthy. **Desperately wicked**—Literally, *mortally sick*.

10. The ninth verse closes with the question: **Who can know it?**—This verse answers it—Only God. He can probe it to the core, and understand all its crookedness and perverseness. **Ways**—Literally, *way*. Omit the “and” inserted by the translators.

11. Partridge—Literally, *the caller*. It is uncertain what bird is meant, but the weight of testimony lies in favour of the common version. **Sitteth**, etc.—Ratier, *gathereth eggs she hath not brought forth*. There is no proof of any such habit on the part of this bird. The saying is probably a proverbial one, and so is accounted for by the existence of the proverb. It is a fit illustration of the folly of the man who accumulates by fraud and treachery, to be finally dispossessed of his ill-gotten gains, and die a fool.

12. Glorious high throne—Here commences a brief but most impressive invocation of Jehovah. The copula should not be used in this verse, as such a cold, dogmatic statement would be here most inappropriate. These phrases are a part of the invocation. As the mind mounts up to God, it first rests on what might be called the ex-

ternals of his presence, and, through these, approaches his personality. *O throne of glory, set on high* (literally, loftiness) *from the beginning, place of our sanctuary—Jehovah, the hope of Israel*.

13. Written in the earth—Where they shall soon disappear. In Exod. xxxii, 32, it is implied that the friends of God have their names written in his book, and in Dan. xii, 1, this is called the “book of life.” “Written in the earth” stands in contrast with this book of God’s remembrance. **That depart from me**—One of many instances in which the prophet seems to identify himself with Jehovah, so that to leave one would be to leave the other.

s Chap. 14. 8.—t Psa. 73. 27; Isa. 1. 28.—u See Luke 10. 20.—v Chap. 2. 13.—w Deut. 10. 21; Psa. 109. 1; 143. 14.—x Isa. 5. 19; Ezek. 12. 22; Amos 5. 18; 2 Pet. 3. 4.—y Chap. 1. 4, etc.—z Heb. *after thee*.—z Chap. 16. 19.

PRAYER FOR PROTECTION AND SAFETY, 14–18.

14. Heal . . . save—Here begins the prophet’s prayer for himself, and the paragraph division should come here.

16. A pastor to follow thee—Better, *a shepherd after thee*. **The woful day**—Literally, *the day of mortal sickness*: the day of judgment and calamity to the city and nation. **Was right before thee**—Omit the misleading word “right” inserted by the translators. The meaning is: I have spoken as in God’s presence. No higher claim could be set up by an ambassador of heaven. Did every Christian minister always have as realizing and vivid a sense of God’s presence as of the presence of his fellow men, it

hope in the day of evil. **18** * Let them be confounded that persecute me, but * let not me be confounded: let them be dismayed, but let not me be dismayed: bring upon them the day of evil, and * destroy them with double destruction.

19 Thus said the Lord unto me; Go and stand in the gate of the children of the people, whereby the kings of Judah come in, and by the which they go out, and in all the gates of Jerusalem; **20** And say unto them, ^a Hear ye the word of the Lord, ye kings of Judah, and all Judah, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, that enter in by these gates: **21** Thus saith the Lord; * Take heed to yourselves, and bear no burden on the sabbath day, nor bring it in by the gates of Jerusalem; **22** Neither carry

forth a burden out of your houses on the sabbath day, neither do ye any work, but hallow ye the sabbath day, as I * commanded your fathers. **23** * But they obeyed not, neither inclined their ear, but made their neck stiff, that they might not hear, nor receive instruction. **24** And it shall come to pass, if ye diligently hearken unto me, saith the Lord, to bring in no burden through the gates of this city on the sabbath day, but hallow the sabbath day, to do no work therein; **25** ^b Then shall there enter into the gates of this city kings and princes sitting upon the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, they, and their princes, the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem: and this city shall remain for ever. **26** And they

^a Psa. 35. 4; 40. 14; 70. 2. — ^b Psa. 25. 2. — ^c Heb. *break them with a double breach.* — ^e Chap. 11. 20. — ^d Chap. 19. 3; 22. 2.

^e Num. 15. 32, etc.; Neh. 13. 19. — ^f Exod. 20. 8; 23. 12; 31. 13; Ezek. 20. 12. — ^g Chap. 7. 24, 25; 11. 10. — ^h Chap. 22. 4.

would elevate and purify the tone and spirit of his utterances as nothing else could.

18. Let not me be confounded—This prayer for himself becomes here a prayer against his enemies, and yet not so much foes of Jeremiah as of Jehovah. It is not personal hate and vindictiveness which breathes through these words, but love for God and jealousy for his honour.

EXHORTATION TO HALLOW THE SABBATH, 19–27.

19, 20. The connexion here is certainly not close: but the theme introduced is related to the general drift in that it lays bare another of the causes of Judah's ruin. **Gate of the children of the people**—Was this a gate of the city or the temple? As we find elsewhere no intimation of a gate with such a designation, we must fall back on general conjecture. The force of the phrase would seem to be, *the people's gate*; and yet it is said that the **kings of Judah come in... by these gates**. This would suggest a gate into the people's court of the sanctuary, the priests gaining admission to their court by means of another gate. The "children of the people," then, must mean the people as distinguished from the priests; or, in other words, the laity. It is possible that even then

the traffic by which the temple was defiled in our Lord's time had commenced, and that there was a violation of the law of the sabbath even at the sanctuary itself.

21, 22. Take heed to yourselves—Literally, *to your souls*. **Bear no burden...neither do ye any work**—These are specifications as to the law of the sabbath, suggested, probably, by violations which were common. The bearing of burdens probably refers to market trade and business. It is not unlikely that the country people, as they came to temple-service, were accustomed to "mingle traffic with their devotions;" and, as has been suggested, the fact that the people of Jerusalem were forbidden to carry burdens out of their houses seems to point to a practice on their part of carrying their wares to the gates for the purpose of traffic with the inhabitants on their holy day.

25. Then shall there enter—A noble picture of national grandeur and prosperity. **Sitting upon the throne of David**—Such elevation belongs, in strictness, only to **kings**, but the term **princes** is associated, perhaps to give the picture a more popular cast. **Riding in chariots and on horses**, suggests what, in such case, would be the "undiminished splendour of the rule of David's race."

shall come from the cities of Judah, and from ¹the places about Jerusalem, and from the land of Benjamin, and from ²the plain, and from the mountains, and from ³the south, bringing burnt offerings, and sacrifices, and meat offerings, and incense, and bringing ⁴sacrifices of praise, unto the house of the LORD. **27** But if ye will not hearken unto me to hallow the sabbath day, and not to bear a burden, even entering in at the gates of Jerusalem on the sabbath day; then ^awill I kindle a fire in the gates thereof, ^oand it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem, and it shall not be quenched.

ⁱ Chap. 32. 44; 33. 13. — ^k Zech. 7. 7. — ^l Zech. 7. 7 — ^m Psa. 107. 22; 116. 11. — ⁿ Chap. 21. 14; 49. 27; Lam. 4. 11; Amos 1. 4, 7, 10, 12; 2. 2, 5. — ^o 2 Kings 25. 9; chap. 52. 13.

26. They shall come.—An answering description of religious grandeur and prosperity. The specifications are such as give completeness to the picture. As to offerings, the two great classes are mentioned, namely, *bloody*—**burnt offerings and sacrifices**, and *unbloody*—**meat offerings and incense**. As to localities, we have **cities of Judah, places about Jerusalem, land of Benjamin, the plain, the mountains, and the south**—showing the universal participation of the people.

27. I kindle a fire in the gates.—The very places mentioned as those of disobedience and profanation. God's punitive judgments always move in the precise path of sin, and will follow it out in all its windings and ramifications.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE FIGURE OF THE POTTER, 1-4.

1. The word which came, etc.—A general title of the ensuing three chapters, which should be taken together as constituting a single section. This section consists of two parts; distinct, but mutually complementary. The first (chap. xviii) contains the parable of the potter and the misshapen vessel; the second (chapters xix, xx) gives an account of the breaking of the pitcher, and of the warnings and persecutions which followed.

2. Go down.—Suggesting the loca-

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, **2** Arise, and go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause thee to hear my words. **3** Then I went down to the potter's house, and, behold, he wrought a work on the ¹wheels. **4** And the vessel ²that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter: so he ³made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make *it*. **5** Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **6** O house of Israel, ^acannot I do with you as this potter? saith the LORD. Behold, ^bas the clay *is* in the potter's hand, so *are* ye in mine

¹ Or, *frames, or, seats*. — ² Or, *that he made was marred, as clay in the hand of the potter*. — ³ Heb. *returned and made*. — ^a Isa. 45. 9; Rom. 9. 20, 21. — ^b Isa. 64. 8.

tion of the **potter's house** or workshop in some valley near the city. The precise spot was in the valley of Hinnom, south of Jerusalem, the place made famous forever by the prophecy of Zechariah, (xi, 13,) the fulfilment of which is recorded by Matthew.

3. Wheels.—Literally, *the two wheels*. The potter's lathe consisted of two frames or wheels revolving horizontally. Of these the lower was the larger, and was worked by the foot to give motion to the upper one. Upon this the potter placed his clay, and shaped it, as it rapidly revolved, with his fingers.

4. The vessel . . . was marred, etc.—The meaning simply is: If the vessel was marred, he made again another vessel of it. Some MSS., instead of the reading of **clay**—literally, *in clay*—have *as clay*, and this reading, which is given in the margin of the Authorized Version, is adopted by Nögelbach. But on no ground whatever is it to be preferred.

INTERPRETATION OF THE PARABLE, 5-10.

5, 6. Cannot I do . . . as this potter.—In the application of the emblem used, God refutes the dependence of the Jews on their outward election. As the potter crushes the misshapen vessel in order that it may be refashioned, so Jehovah crushes by affliction his wayward and rebellious people, in or-

hand, O house of Israel. **7** *At what instant* I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it; **8** ^d If that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, ^e I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. **9** And *at what instant* I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it; **10** If it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them.

11 Now therefore go to, speak to

^c Chap. 1. 10. — ^d Ezek. 18. 21; 33. 11. — ^e Chap. 26. 3; Jonah 3. 10. — ^f 2 Kings 17. 13; chap. 7. 3; 25. 5; 26. 13; 35. 15. — ^g Chap. 2. 25. — ^h Chap. 2. 10; 1 Cor. 5. 1.

der that his purpose as to their mission may not be frustrated.

7, 9. At what instant...at what instant—These phrases are correlative, like the **now...now**, of verse 11.

8. Repent—The strongest type of anthropopathic language applied to God, just as we ascribe the qualities of animate beings to inanimate; as "The sun rises;" "The shore recedes."

10. I will repent of the good—How fearful an illustration of this did God furnish in this very place. They who bought this potter's field with the price of innocent and holy blood, furnish by so doing an historically perpetual and most sad and impressive instance of a potter's vessel dashed to destruction.

APPLICATION OF THE PARABLE,
11-17.

11. Frame—The Hebrew word here is kindred with that for potter, so that the continued reference to the illustration already given is more specific than appears in the Authorized Version.

12. No hope—See on ii, 25.

13. Heathen—Literally, *nations*. The word is steadily used as standing over against Israel. Hence the version is good. **Virgin of Israel**—See on Isa. i, 8; chap. xiv, 17.

14. Will a man leave the snow of Lebanon...from the rock of the field? etc.—Two questions arise on

the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith the LORD; Behold, I frame evil against you, and devise a device against you: ^freturn ye now every one from his evil way, and make your ways and your doings good. **12** And they said, ^gThere is no hope: but we will walk after our own devices, and we will every one do the imagination of his evil heart. **13** Therefore thus saith the LORD; ^hAsk ye now among the heathen, who hath heard such things: the virgin of Israel hath done ⁱa very horrible thing. **14** Will a man leave ⁱthe snow of Lebanon which cometh from the rock of the

ⁱ Chap. 5. 30. — ⁴ Or, *my fields for a rock, or for the snow of Lebanon? shall the running waters be forsaken for the strange cold waters?*

this passage: How shall it be translated, and how interpreted?

I. Two translations have been proposed which are worthy of notice:—

1. That of Noyes, after Michælis, Rosenmüller, Neumann, Maurer, and others: *Shall the snow from the rock of Lebanon (snow of Lebanon from the rock) forsake my fields?* 1) But in this the phrase, "from the rock," is harsh and unmeaning. It adds nothing to the sense, and is, certainly, a clumsy expression for "rock of Lebanon." 2) It mentions Lebanon as the source of the water supply of Palestine, while, in other passages, the sea is so mentioned.

2. That of Keil and Nögelsbach: *Will the snow of Lebanon cease from the rock of the field?* This is the simplest and most strictly grammatical rendering, and is clearly to be preferred.

II. Two interpretations of this last translation have been given.

1. By "the rock of the field" Mount Zion is meant. In favour of this may be considered: 1) Mount Zion is so called in chap. xvii, 3, while in chap. xxi, 13, the kindred phrase, "rock of the plain," is applied to it. 2) In Psa. cxxxiii, 8, the "dew of Hermon," the conspicuous and representative mountain of the Lebanon group is spoken of as "descending upon the mountains of Zion." 3) The structure of the sentence clearly forbids us to identify the "rock of the field" with

field? or shall the cold flowing waters that come from another place be forsaken? **15** Because my people hath

k Chap. 2. 13. 32; 3. 21; 13. 25; 17. 13.

Lebanon. But, as bearing against this view, we should note: 1) The application of this phrase to Mount Zion, in another passage, is not conclusive as to its meaning here, though it does create an affirmative presumption. 2) The bold figure in Psalm cxxxiii, in which the dew of Hermon is said to come down upon the mountains of Zion, is no sufficient justification of the assumption that there was supposed to be a connexion between the snow of Lebanon and the springs of Jerusalem. If such a notion as this prevailed, either among the many or the few, we ought to find some notice of it in other places. 3) The word "Lebanon" in this place, is rather an appellative than the name of a locality: *As the Lebanon snow*, etc. The same remark also applies to the passage above alluded to, in which the "dew of Hermon" is mentioned.

2. By the phrase "rock of the field," Lebanon is meant. 1) This is the natural interpretation. The snow of Lebanon is the snow that rests on Lebanon, and gives it its name—*Lebanon = white mountain*—and it can **leave** only the place where it is. Hence, the "rock of the field" is "Lebanon." 2) This being the natural view, it is in order now to note that no considerations such as are mentioned above bear with conclusive force against it and in favour of any other. 3) This gives a sense at once intelligible and impressive. Just as appeal was once made to the bow in the heavens, which was not a symbol but only a sign of God's covenant, so here "the prophet appeals to the unchangeableness of one of nature's most beautiful phenomena—the perpetual snow on the summits of Lebanon"—as a fit token of man's unchanging faithfulness to God, the source of all gracious supply. 4) This view is strongly confirmed by the remainder of the verse, with which it is in perfect harmony.

forgotten ^{me}, they have burned incense to ^{vanity}, and they have caused them to stumble in their ways *from* the ^{an}-

l Chap. 10. 15; 16. 19.—*m* Chap. 6. 16.

Or shall the cold flowing waters, etc.?—Literally, *shall the strange, cool, trickling waters be plucked up?* (dried up?) By "strange" waters are meant those that come from afar, whose sources are hidden—a phrase seemingly appropriate to the wealth of springs in Lebanon. The epithet "cold" is also suggestive of these. The general idea is that of faithfulness or constancy. The cool, perennial mountain springs, that seem to flow forth from an unwasting fullness, stand in vivid contrast with the deceitful brooks which are so characteristic of Palestine, and which have already been referred to as a symbol of idolatrous trusts. No fitter emblem of the ever-flowing stream of God's bounty can be found in the range of material nature than the *strange, cool, trickling waters* of the Lebanon springs.

Thus do both members of this difficult verse blend in a most appropriate and expressive symbolism. The "rock of the field" points to the Rock of eternity. The sublime vision of perpetual snow resting on its summit symbolizes that glory which the Eternal as a garment wears. And that equally characteristic feature, the mountain stream, whose waters flow on ever conscious of their distant snowy fountains, is happily expressive of the never-failing stream of the divine beneficence. The appeal is to the *constancy* of these. Is not nature true in her friendships? Does she not stand always visible and always faithful? Do not her streams of beneficent supply pour forth unceasingly? Even so is God to his people; but they turn away from him to follow after vanity, and "make their land desolate and a perpetual hissing."

15. They have caused—The construction here is impersonal—men have caused, etc. In all probability the reference is to Judah's false prophets and false priests who really made her to err. Chap. v, 31. The idols in

cient paths, to walk in paths, *in* a way not cast up; **16** To make their land *a* desolate, *and* *a* perpetual *a* hissing; every one that passeth thereby shall be astonished, and wag his head. **17** *I* will scatter them *a* as with an east wind before the enemy; *I* will show them the back, and not the face, in the day of their calamity.

18 Then said they, *a* Come, and let us devise devices against Jeremiah; *a* for the law shall not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet. Come, and let us smite him *a* with the tongue, and let us not give heed to any of his words.

19 Give heed to me, O LORD, and hearken to the voice of them that contend with me. **20** *a* Shall evil be recompensed for good? for *a* they have digged a pit for my soul. Remember that I stood before thee to speak good for them, *and* to turn away thy wrath from them.

21 Therefore *a* deliver up their children

n Chap. 19. 8; 49. 13; 50. 13.—*o* 1 Kings 9. 8; Lam. 2. 15; Micah 6. 16.—*p* Chap. 13. 24.—*q* 1sa. 48. 7.—*r* See chap. 2. 27.—*s* Chap. 11. 19.—*t* Lev. 10. 11; Mal. 2. 7; John 7. 48, 49.—*u* Ps. 109. 4, 5.

themselves were powerless for either good or evil. **Ancient paths**—Literally, *paths of eternity*: those ways which are laid in truth and so are changeless. **Not cast up**—Raised up so as to be above the reach of the floods.

16. Wag his head—Rather, *shake his head*, a sign, not of contempt, but pity.

THE RECEPTION OF THE DISCOURSE, 18–23.

18. This verse sets forth the effect of Jeremiah's words on the people. **Law shall not perish**, etc.—We have no need of this prophet of evil; we have the law and our priests. **Smite him with the tongue**—A really characteristic Hebrew phrase.

21. Pour out their blood, etc.—Literally, *pour them out upon the hands of the sword*; that is, give them up to its power.

22. From their houses—To the terrors of war and famine are added the sack and pillage of the city.

23. Thou knowest all their counsel—A comprehensive summing up of the whole prayer. For some ex-

to the famine, and *a* pour out their blood by the force of the sword; and let their wives be bereaved of their children, and *be* widows; and let their men be put to death; *let* their young men *be* slain by the sword in battle. **22** Let a cry be heard from their houses, when thou shalt bring a troop suddenly upon them: for *a* they have digged a pit to take me, and hid snares for my feet. **23** Yet, LORD, thou knowest all their counsel against me *a* to slay me: *a* forgive not their iniquity, neither blot out their sin from thy sight, but let them be overthrown before thee; *deal thus* with them in the time of thine anger.

CHAPTER XIX.

THUS saith the LORD, Go and get a potter's earthen bottle, and *take* of the ancients of the people, and of the ancients of the priests; **2** And go forth unto *a* the valley of the son of Hinnom, which *is* by the entry of *a* the east gate,

v Ps. 35. 7; 57. 6; ver. 22.—*w* Ps. 109. 9, 10.—*x* Heb. *pour them out*.—*y* Ver. 20.—*z* Heb. *for death*.—*v* Ps. 35. 4; 109. 14; chap. 11. 20; 15. 15.—*a* Josh. 15. 8; 2 Kings 23. 10; chap. 7. 31.—*1* Heb. *the sun gate*.

cellent observations on Jeremiah's imprecatory prayers, see Keil in his Commentary on this place.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE BROKEN PITCHER AND ITS LESSON, 1–13.

1. Potter—Literally, *shaper of earthenware*. **Bottle**—A jar with a narrow neck, whose Hebrew name—*bakkuk*—comes from the noise made by liquids in flowing out. **Get**—Literally, *buy*. By a bold construction, not unusual in Hebrew, the word is carried over upon the incongruous nouns **people** and **priests**. The Septuagint and Syriac versions, as well as our own, insert the verb **take**. **Ancients**—Rather, *elders*, representing the commonwealth in both its civil and ecclesiastical aspects, and, as it would seem, those most ready to hear the word of God.

2. Valley of the son of Hinnom—See on vii, 31. This designation of locality is the same with that of the previous chapter, but more specific. **East gate**—Margin, *sun gate*. Both renderings are wrong. It should be *sheer* gate, an appellation which prob-

and proclaim there the words that I shall tell thee: **3** ^b And say, Hear ye the word of the Lord, O kings of Judah, and inhabitants of Jerusalem; Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, the which whosoever heareth, his ears shall ^c tingle. **4** Because they ^d have forsaken me, and have estranged this place, and have burned incense in it unto other gods, whom neither they nor their fathers have known, nor the kings of Judah, and have filled this place with ^e the blood of innocents; **5** ^f They have built also the high places of Baal, to burn their sons with fire for burnt offerings unto Baal, ^g which I commanded not, nor spake it, neither came it into my mind: **6** Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that this place shall no more be called Tophet, nor ^h The valley of the son of Hinnom, but The valley of slaughter. **7** And I will make void the counsel of Judah and Jerusalem in this place; ⁱ and

I will cause them to fall by the sword before their enemies, and by the hands of them that seek their lives: and their ^k carcasses will I give to be meat for the fowls of the heaven, and for the beasts of the earth. **8** And I will make this city ^l desolate, and a hissing; every one that passeth thereby shall be astonished and hiss, because of all the plagues thereof. **9** And I will cause them to eat the ^m flesh of their sons and the flesh of their daughters, and they shall eat every one the flesh of his friend in the siege and straitness, wherewith their enemies, and they that seek their lives, shall straiten them. **10** ⁿ Then shalt thou break the bottle in the sight of the men that go with thee, **11** And shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord of hosts; ^o Even so will I break this people and this city, as *one* breaketh a potter's vessel, that cannot ^p be made whole again: and they shall ^q bury them in Tophet, till *there be* no place to bury. **12** Thus will I do unto this place, saith

^b Chap. 17. 20. — ^c 1 Sam. 3. 11; 2 Kings 21. 12. — ^d Deut. 28. 20; Isa. 65. 11; chap. 2. 13, 17, 19; 15. 6; 17. 13. — ^e 2 Kings 21. 16; chap. 2. 34. — ^f Chap. 7. 31, 32; 32. 35. — ^g Lev. 18. 21. — ^h Josh. 15. 8. — ⁱ Lev. 26. 17; Deut. 28. 25.

^k Psa. 79. 2; chap. 7. 33; 16. 4; 34. 20. — ^l Chap. 18. 16; 49. 13; 50. 13. — ^m Lev. 26. 29; Deut. 28. 53; Isa. 9. 20; Lam. 4. 10. — ⁿ So chap. 51. 63, 64. — ^o Psa. 2. 9; Isa. 30. 14; Lam. 4. 2. — ^p 2 Heb. *be healed*. — ^q Chap. 7. 32.

ably came from the broken fragments of earthenware scattered there. It is uncertain which of the two gates leading from the city into the valley of Hinnom is here meant—the Fountain gate, at the southwest corner, or the Dung gate, at the southeast corner, of Zion.

3. Kings of Judah—The plural is used, because the message of the prophet referred to more than the reigning king. **Ears... tingle**—See 2 Kings xxi, 12; 1 Sam. iii, 21.

4. Estranged this place—Rather, *disowned this place*. The same verb occurs in Job xxi, 29. The meaning is, they have treated it as a strange place, perhaps by worshipping strange gods. **Neither they nor, etc.**—The exact construction of the original is: *Other gods which they knew not: they and their fathers and the kings of Judah*; these nouns being subjects, not of **have known**, but of the verbs of the principal clause. **Innocents**—Not, as some have hastily concluded, children slain to Moloch, but guiltless persons who were victims of persecution and judicial murder. See 2 Kings xxi, 16, and chapters vii, 6; xxii, 3, 17.

5, 6. Compare vii, 31, 32.

7. Make void—The root of this word is the same with that of the word for "bottle." It would be better to translate, *I will pour out*; that is, bring to nothing.

9. Eat the flesh, etc.—Mainly from Deut. xxviii, 53, and Lev. xxvi, 29. Famine is added to complete the terrible picture. For the fulfilment, see Lam. ii, 20; iv, 10.

10. Then shalt thou break the bottle—The coming calamity is set forth by this vivid symbol. Jeremiah does this in the sight of the elders, in order to arrest their attention and open their ears to his words.

11. Cannot be made whole again—In this it differed from the symbol of the preceding chapter. That set forth the one unailing, invincible purpose of God in crushing the vessel for its more perfect moulding, and so bringing a fuller victory out of apparent defeat; here we have the judgment of God dashing into fragments a worthless vessel. The innumerable fragments fitly represent the countless slain.

the LORD, and to the inhabitants thereof, and *even* make this city as Tophet: **13** And the houses of Jerusalem, and the houses of the kings of Judah, shall be defiled ^a as the place of Tophet, because of all the houses upon whose ^r roofs they have burned incense unto all the host of heaven, and ^s have poured out drink offerings unto other gods. **14** Then came Jeremiah from Tophet, whither the LORD had sent him to prophesy; and he stood in ^t the court of the LORD's house, and said to all the people, **15** Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Behold, I will bring upon this city and upon all her towns all the evil that I have pronounced against it, because ^u they have

^q 2 Kings 23. 10. — ^r 2 Kings 23. 12; chap. 32. 24; Zeph. 1. 5. — ^s Chap. 7. 18. — ^t See 2 Chron. 20. 5.

12. As Tophet—See 2 Kings xxiii, 10: chap. vii, 31.

13. Defiled, etc.—Literally, *as Tophet the defiled*. The article, with the word "defiled," seems to fix this construction, though "defiled" is plural, while Tophet, its subject, is singular. This is to be explained as a case of attraction to the leading subject, houses. **Upon whose roofs**, etc.—On the worship of the stars from the house-tops, see Zeph. i, 5; 2 Kings xxi, 3; 2 Kings xxiii, 12.

JEREMIAH'S MESSAGE IN THE TEMPLE, 14, 15.

14, 15. These verses belong with the following chapter.

CHAPTER XX.

THE OPPOSITION AND THE PUNISHMENT OF PASHUR, 1-6.

1. Pashur—Many individuals of this name are mentioned, but none can be certainly identified with this one. It is possible, and indeed probable, but by no means certain, that he is the one mentioned in chapter xxxviii, 1, as the father of Gedaliah. The Pashur of the following chapter is another person. This one seems to have stood at the head of the sixteenth course of priests, (1 Chron. xxiv, 14,) called sons of Immer, who was their ancestor in David's time. Of this house ten hundred and fifty-two men returned from the exile. **Chief governor**—The epithet "chief"

hardened their necks, that they might not hear my words.

CHAPTER XX.

NOW Pashur the son of ^a Immer the priest, who *was* also chief governor in the house of the LORD, heard that Jeremiah prophesied these things. **2** Then Pashur smote Jeremiah the prophet, and put him in the stocks that *were* in the high gate of Benjamin, which *was* by the house of the LORD. **3** And it came to pass on the morrow, that Pashur brought forth Jeremiah out of the stocks. Then said Jeremiah unto him, The LORD hath not called thy name Pashur, but ^u Magor-missabib. **4** For thus saith the LORD, Behold, I

^a Chap. 7. 26; 17. 23. — ^u 1 Chron. 24. 14. — 1 That is, *Fear round about*, Ps. 31. 13; ver. 10; chap. 6. 25; 46. 5; 49. 29.

implies that there were many. He was the temple governor, and in dignity ranked next to the high priest. See xxix, 25, 26; lii, 24.

2. Jeremiah the prophet—This designation indicates that he had come to have a public recognition in his prophetic character. It occurs here for the first time. **Stocks**—This word occurs besides only in chap. xxix, 26, and 2 Chronicles xvi, 10. In this last passage it is translated "prison-house." It comes from a root which means to *twist*, and was a contrivance for confining the body in a crooked and painful position. Paul and Silas were subjected to this mode of punishment. Acts xvi, 24. **High gate of Benjamin**—Further designated as a temple gate. **By the house of the Lord**—The epithet "high," or upper, implies that it was a gate to the inner court of the temple, which was raised above the outer court.

3. Pashur—All is uncertain as to the etymology, and so the meaning, of this name. As it is set over against the one which follows, it is probably opposite to it in sense, but just how we do not know. **Magor-missabib**—*Fear round about*, as the margin correctly translates. It seems to have originated from Ps. xxxi, 13. It is a rather common phrase with Jeremiah, being used besides in vi, 25; xx, 10; xlv, 5; xlix, 29; and in Lam. ii, 22. The general significance of this phrase

will make thee a terror to thyself, and to all thy friends: and they shall fall by the sword of their enemies, and thine eyes shall behold it: and I will give all Judah into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall carry them captive into Babylon, and shall slay them with the sword. **5** Moreover I will deliver all the strength of this city, and all the labours thereof, and all the precious things thereof, and all the treasures of the kings of Judah will I give into the hand of their enemies, which shall spoil them, and take them, and carry them to Babylon. **6** And thou, Pashur, and all that dwell in thine house, shall go into captivity: and thou shalt come to Babylon, and there thou shalt die, and shalt be buried there, thou, and all thy friends, to whom thou hast ^c prophesied lies.

^b 2 Kings 20. 17; 24. 12-16; 25. 13, etc.: chan. 3. 24.—^c Chap. 14. 13, 14; 28. 15; 29. 21.—² Or, *enticed*.—^d Chap. 1. 6, 7.—^e Lam. 3. 14.—^f Chap. 6. 7.

has been indicated, but its precise application is less evident. Probably it is used to intimate that the course adopted and carried out under his instigation would involve in calamity not only himself but all those about him.

5. Strength of this city—Its stores and resources. **Labours thereof**—The fruits of labour, the great works of the city.

6. Shall go into captivity—Apparently a milder fate than that of multitudes who, as had been before predicted, should come to fearful deaths, and should lie unburied and be devoured by beasts and birds of prey; and yet, for this very reason, terrible. Pashur will see all this, even to the end; and to him, a leading instigator of the policy which will work out this fearful ruin, the very spectacle itself will be an awful punishment. **Hast prophesied lies**—Opposing his word of power to that of this obscure prophet of evil.

JEREMIAH'S COMPLAINT, 7-18.

7. Deceived—Rather, *persuaded*: though the word often contains the sense of misleading. Here the meaning is: *didst entice me into the prophetic office with vain hopes*. **Thou art stronger**—Literally, *hast taken hold of*:

7 O LORD, thou hast deceived me, and I was ²deceived: "thou art stronger than I, and hast prevailed: ^e I am in derision daily, every one mocketh me. **8** For since I spake, I cried out, 'I cried violence and spoil; because the word of the LORD was made a reproach unto me, and a derision, daily. **9** Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But *his word* was in mine heart as a ^h burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and ^a I could not stay.

10 ⁱ For I heard the defaming of many, fear on every side. Report, *say they*, and we will report it. ^k All my familiars watched for my halting, *saying*, Peradventure he will be enticed, and we shall prevail against him, and we shall take our revenge on him.

^g Job 32. 18, 19; Psal. 39. 3.—^h Job 32. 18; Acts 18. 5.—ⁱ Psal. 31. 13.—^j Heb. *Every man of my peace*.—^k Job 19. 19; Psal. 41. 9; 55. 13, 14; Luke 11. 53, 54.

placed me in this position of fruitless suffering and danger.

8 Since I spake, I cried out—Rather, *when I speak, I cry out*, as if in pain or protest. The first "cried out" means to make an outcry as in danger or pain; the second **cried** means to call out—proclaim. Such was the subversion of justice on every side—the violence and spoil—that he could not speak calmly, but only cry out.

9. I will not, etc.—Because his word had been apparently fruitless of good, and brought only sorrow to himself. **Shut up in my bones**—A vivid phrase for a restless and resistless inward moving.

10. Defaming—Literally, *talking*: but the word has in it a sinister and evil animus. It does not necessarily mean slandering, but *talking fraught with mischief*. **Fear**, etc.—What follows appear to be fragmentary quotations from his slanderers and opposers.

Familiars—Literally, *men of my peace*, taken from Psal. xli. 9. The allusion in the phrase may be to the usual mode of Eastern salutation—Peace be to thee! The "men of my peace," are those who say when I meet them: Peace be to thee; but who do really watch for my halting.

11 But ¹the LORD *is* with me as a mighty terrible one: therefore my persecutors shall stumble, and they shall not ²prevail: they shall be greatly ashamed; for they shall not prosper; *their* ³everlasting confusion shall never be forgotten. **12** But, O LORD of hosts, that ⁴triest the righteous, and seest the reins and the heart, ⁵let me see thy vengeance on them: for unto thee have I opened my cause. **13** Sing unto the LORD, praise ye the LORD: for ⁶he hath delivered the soul of the poor from the hand of evil doers.

14 ⁷Cursed be the day wherein I was born: let not the day wherein my

mother bare me be blessed. **15** Cursed be the man who brought tidings to my father, saying, A man child is born unto thee; making him very glad. **16** And let that man be as the cities which the LORD ⁸overtrew, and repented not: and let him ⁹hear the cry in the morning, and the shouting at noontide; **17** ¹⁰Because he slew me not from the womb; or that my mother might have been my grave, and her womb *to be* always great *with me*. **18** ¹¹Wherefore came I forth out of the womb *to* ¹²see labour and sorrow, that my days should be consumed with shame?

¹ Chap. 1. 8, 19. — ² Chap. 15. 20; 17. 18. — ³ Chap. 23. 40. — ⁴ Chap. 11. 20; 17. 10. — ⁵ *Ps* 54. 7; 59. 10.

⁶ *Ps* 35. 9, 10; 109. 30, 31. — ⁷ *Job* 3. 3; chap. 15. 10. — ⁸ *Gen* 19. 25. — ⁹ *Chap.* 18. 22. — ¹⁰ *Job* 3. 10, 11. — ¹¹ *Job* 3. 20. — ¹² *Lam.* 3. 1.

11-13. The Lord is with me—Very strikingly does the lament rise into a clear and strong expression of faith in God. Deeper than his despondency, and stronger than the terrors about him, is his trust in God's unfailing strength. And at last, in verse 13, this faith rises into triumph, and he speaks of his deliverance as already accomplished.

14-18. Cursed be the day, etc.—Violent and unexpected is the contrast of this passage with the preceding. Instantly and without warning we are precipitated from the height of perfect and triumphant confidence into the deepest depth of sorrow. The faith which had just shone out full-orbed seems suddenly to pass into a fearful eclipse.

But though there is here a startling contrast, there is no essential inconsistency. The faith of the preceding section, and the intense and bitter sorrow of this, are alike genuine facts of the prophet's experience; and are not necessarily incongruous. Indeed the sorrow which Jeremiah experienced, and which is expressed in these passionate utterances, is not in itself a difficulty; but only its degree as measured by these fearful utterances, and its close relation to the victorious faith of the preceding passage.

But let not the spirit of these passionate words be misunderstood. Too little allowance has been made for the fact that we have here only a summary of the prophet's oral teachings,

so that what we now read in a few sentences represents the experiences of this earnest man, it may be for months and even years. Passages which here stand alongside of each other may reflect states of mind which, in the prophet's actual experience, were separated by a considerable time. Hence the real difficulty, if any there be, must consist in the essential incongruity of these words with a state of loyalty to God.

As we carefully examine this passage, so far from finding it essentially inconsistent with a personal theistic faith, we see that it could come only from one in whom the idea of God

"Like one great furnace flamed"

in his fervid soul. It is his jealous regard for God's honour that gives the keenest bitterness to his grief. The darkest feature of the coming calamity is the fact that it would overspread God's own particular heritage, and sweep away the defences of Jehovah's cause.

In outward form these words are very similar to those fearful utterances of Job recorded in the third chapter of that book. But a careful study of them discloses important differences. Jeremiah's words are not, like Job's, turned directly against God, neither are they so violent and passionate and selfish. They are called forth, not by personal losses of property, health, or friends, but by that which he was inevitably to see, though

O. T.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE word which came unto Jeremiah from the Lord, when king Zedekiah sent unto him ^a Pashur the son of Melchiah, and ^b Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah the priest, saying, **2** ^c Inquire, I pray thee, of the Lord for us; for Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon maketh war against us; if so be that the Lord will deal with us according to all his wondrous works, that he may go up from us.

^a Chapter 38. 1. — ^b 2 Kings 25. 18; chapter 29. 25; 37. 3.

he had struggled against it so long—the ruin of the commonwealth and the discomfiture of God's people before their heathen enemies. We do not, indeed, deny that there is in this fierce outcry an element of human passion. Jeremiah may have felt that he had been sacrificed to no good end—that he had been too much left to himself in executing Jehovah's commission. Like Moses, Elijah, and even John, he may have mingled his selfish hopes and disappointments with the deeper experiences of faith and loyalty to God. But this only proves what is so abundantly illustrated everywhere—that this man of God was also “subject to like passions as we are.”

Special Predictions of the Judgment to be accomplished by the Chaldeans, and of the Messianic Salvation.

CHAPTERS XXI-XXXIII.

CHAPTER XXI.

With this chapter commences a new section of this book of prophecies. This section extends, according to Keil's plan of the book, so as to include the thirty-third chapter.

THE KING'S QUESTION, 1, 2.

1. The word . . . from the Lord—The historical heading of the following prediction. For a better view of the historical setting of this whole passage, see chapters xxxvii and xxxviii, between which this would fall. **When King Zedekiah sent**—The embassy here mentioned was sent after the siege of the city had actually commenced. That in this time of extremity and peril the king

3 Then said Jeremiah unto them, Thus shall ye say to Zedekiah: **4** Thus saith the Lord God of Israel: Behold, I will turn back the weapons of war that are in your hands, wherewith ye fight against the king of Babylon, and against the Chaldeans, which besiege you without the walls, and ^d I will assemble them into the midst of this city. **5** And I myself will fight against you with an outstretched hand and with a strong arm, even in anger, and in fury, and in great

^e Chapter 37. 3, 7. — ^d Isaiah 13. 4. — ^e Exodus 6. 6.

should send distinguished men to consult Jeremiah, shows not only the consternation of the court, but also the recognition vouchsafed to this prophet of evil. Corrupt and wicked men oft-times have in their hearts a conviction deeper and purer than they express with their lips and lives; and under the pressure of a great danger or calamity it will reveal itself. **Pashur**—Not the Pashur of the previous chapter, and not a priest, but probably a court official. His companion, **Zephaniah**, held a high position in the priesthood. See chapters xxix, 25; xxxvii, 3; lii, 24: and in xxxviii, 1, 4, he is mentioned as attempting to persuade the king to put Jeremiah to death.

2. Inquire—Not pray for deliverance, but ask for a revelation. Perhaps the memory of Sennacherib's miraculous discomfiture inspired the hope of a similar interference. **Nebuchadrezzar**—This is the common orthography of this name in Jeremiah and Ezekiel, and is closer to the original than our Nebuchadnezzar. **According to all his wondrous works**—This expression confirms the intimation given above, that they may have had hope of miraculous help.

THE PROPHET'S ANSWER, 3-14.

4. I will turn back, etc.—No help for the king in God. **Without the walls**, should be joined to **ye fight**, and not as in the Authorized Version.

5. With an outstretched . . . arm—The same “arm” which of old was outstretched for their deliverance from Egyptian bondage will be stretched to sweep them into captivity

wrath. **6** And I will smite the inhabitants of this city, both man and beast: they shall die of a great pestilence. **7** And afterward, saith the LORD, ^aI will deliver Zedekiah king of Judah, and his servants, and the people, and such as are left in this city from the pestilence, from the sword, and from the famine, into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, and into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of those that seek their life: and he shall smite them with the edge of the sword; ^bhe shall not spare them, neither have pity, nor have mercy.

8 And unto this people thou shalt say, Thus saith the LORD; Behold, ^aI set before you the way of life, and the way of death. **9** He that ^aabideth in this city shall die by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence: but he that goeth out, and falleth to the Chaldeans that besiege you, he shall

^f Chap. 37. 17; 39. 5; 52. 9.—^g Deut. 28. 50; 2 Chron. 36. 17.—^h Deut. 30. 19.—ⁱ Chap. 38. 2, 17, 18.—^k Chap. 39. 18; 45. 5.—^l Lev. 17. 10; Chap. 44. 11; Amos 9. 4.—^m Chap. 38. 3.—ⁿ Chap. 34, 2, 22; 37. 10; 38. 18, 23; 52. 13.

7. Deliver—Not “from” but *into* the hand of their enemies. **King...servants...people, and such as are left**—Such of them as “are left,” or escape with life from the “pestilence, sword, and famine.”

8. Way of life...death—A grim and ghastly echo of Deut. xxx, 19. Here the alternatives are, life saved by desertion to the enemy, or death by sword, pestilence, and famine.

9. Falleth to the Chaldeans—That is, goes over to them. This apparently most treasonable intimation is but another way of saying that all resistance is useless. The city is doomed. Inevitable defeat is before them. **Life shall be unto him for a prey**—The ingenious note of Dean Smith on this phrase is hardly warranted: “A prey is something not a man’s own, upon which he seizes in the midst of danger, and hurries away with it. So must the Jews hurry away with their lives, as something more than they had a right to, and place them in the Chaldean camp as a place of safety.” The simple idea is, he shall preserve this most precious of all his treasures from the rapacious ruin.

live, and ^ahis life shall be unto him for a prey. **10** For I have ^aset my face against this city for evil, and not for good, saith the LORD: ^mit shall be given into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall ^aburn it with fire.

11 And touching the house of the king of Judah, *say*, Hear ye the word of the LORD; **12** O house of David, thus saith the LORD; ^aExecute judgment ^pin the morning, and deliver *him that is* spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor, lest my fury go out like fire, and burn that none can quench *it*, because of the evil of your doings.

13 Behold, ^aI am against thee, O ^ainhabitant of the valley, and rock of the plain, saith the LORD; which say, ^aWho shall come down against us? or who shall enter into our habitations? **14** But I will ^apunish you according to the ^afruit of your doings, saith the LORD: and I will kindle a fire in the

^o Chapter 22. 3; Zechariah 7. 9.—¹ Hebrew, *Judge*.—^p Psalm 101. 8.—^q Ezekiel 13. 8.—² Hebrew, *inhabitors*.—^r Chapter 49. 4.—³ Hebrew, *visit upon*.—^s Proverbs 1. 31; Isaiah 3. 10, 11.

11, 12. Some regard these verses as entirely independent of the foregoing, but there is no sufficient reason for this. The exhortation to righteousness could never be more appropriate or more forcible than when impressed by the sad lesson of their corruption and the ruin it had procured. Most unfortunately are these verses separated from each other. The word **Hear**, in verse 11, should go along with the appellative **house of David**, in verse 12.

13. O inhabitant of the valley—Jerusalem, which is literally a rock in a “valley.” The ravines of Hinnom and Kidron, and the high mountains round about, especially Olivet and Mizpah, justify this description, while at the same time it is still the **rock of the plain**, Zion being the bold and abrupt southern termination of the tableland which stretches far northward. The two expressions mark the strength of the position—a rocky fortress surrounded on three sides by ravines.

14. In answer to the self-secure question of the preceding verse, “Who shall come down against us?” the terrible answer comes, **the Lord!** The

forest thereof, and 'it shall devour all things round about it.

CHAPTER XXII.

THUS saith the LORD; Go down to the house of the king of Judah, and speak there this word, **2** And say, ^aHear the word of the LORD, O king of Judah, that sittest upon the throne of David, thou, and thy servants, and thy people that enter in by these gates: **3** Thus saith the LORD; ^bExecute ye judgment and righteousness, and deliver the spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor: and ^cdo no wrong, do no violence to the stranger, the fatherless, nor the widow, neither shed innocent

^t2 Chron. 36. 19; chap. 52. 13. — ^aChap. 17. 20.

— ^bChap. 21. 12. — ^cSee ver. 17. — ^dChap.

strong city has no defences against Him, and he it is who will accomplish its overthrow. **Forest**—The dense mass of houses, built, many of them, of the Lebanon cedar. Hence the expressions in xxii, 6, "Gilead" and "head of Lebanon.

CHAPTER XXII.

AN EXHORTATION TO RIGHTEOUSNESS, 1-9.

1. Go down—From the temple to the king's house. See 2 Chron. xxiii, 20; chap. xxvi, 10; xxxvi, 12.

2. Throne of David—The highest seat a man might occupy; but now this humble God-sent prophet is higher still.

Thou...servants...people—Showing that the word was of common interest. All are bound up together in the issues of this solemn crisis.

These gates—That is, the gates of the royal palace. Probably the people were wont to assemble there to wait upon the administration of the king.

3. Execute...judgment—The original here is not the same as in chapter xxi, 12. The phrase there has an official import; here the sense is, *do right*—a command of universal application.

4. Kings sitting...riding—See xvii, 25. **Servants and people** are introduced as participating in the pomp of the royal retinue and as sharing the benefits of the kingly rule.

5. I swear by myself—See Heb. vi, 13, 17. In this instance God is

blood in this place. **4** For if ye do this thing indeed, ^athen shall there enter in by the gates of this house kings sitting ¹upon the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, ^{he}, and his servants, and his people. **5** But if ye will not hear these words, ^cI swear by myself, saith the LORD, that this house shall become a desolation. **6** For thus saith the LORD unto the king's house of Judah; *Thou art Gilead unto me, and the head of Lebanon: yet surely I will make thee a wilderness, and cities which are not inhabited.* **7** And I will prepare destroyers against thee, every one with his weapons: and they shall cut down ^fthy choice cedars, ^gand cast *them*

17. 25. — ¹Heb. for David upon his throne. — ^eHeb. 6. 13, 17. — ^fIsa. 37. 24. — ^gChap. 21. 14.

represented as swearing, as if to overcome the antecedent incredibility that the family of David should be cast off. **This house**—The royal palace, where Jeremiah was then speaking.

6. Thou art Gilead unto me, and the head of Lebanon—Beautiful as Gilead, majestic as Lebanon. This language is used in respect of the commanding position and magnificence of the royal palace. Gilead was doubtless then, as now, the most beautiful forest tract in the vicinity of the Holy Land; and Lebanon everywhere stands as the symbol of stateliness and magnificence. Its perpetual snows, its firs and cedars, its wealth of springs, and its noble forests, are all prominent in the scenery of the Old Testament. To these localities this splendid palace, with its cluster of associated buildings, is beautifully and expressively compared. But God's displeasure will change all this splendour and magnificence into a treeless steppe: **wilderness...cities...not inhabited.**

7. Prepare—Literally, *consecrate*. **Destroyers**—These will come on His errand to execute his will. Strangely does such a word sound in application to cruel and merciless men; and yet the truth is a profound and comprehensive one. Any arrow which the Almighty places in his quiver, or shoots from his bow, is "consecrated" to a divine mission. But this does not at all contravene, mitigate, or in any way modify,

into the fire. **8** And many nations shall pass by this city, and they shall say every man to his neighbour, ^a Wherefore hath the LORD done thus unto this great city? **9** Then they shall answer, ^b Because they have forsaken the covenant of the LORD their God, and worshipped other gods, and served them.

10 Weep ye not for ^c the dead, neither bemoan him; but weep sore for him ^d that goeth away: for he shall return no more, nor see his native country.

11 For thus saith the LORD touching ^e Shallum the son of Josiah king of Judah, which reigned instead of Josiah

^a Deut. 29, 24, 25; **1 Kings** 9, 8, 9.—^b **2 Kings** 22, 17; **2 Chron.** 34, 25.—^c **2 Kings** 23, 20.—^d **1 Ver.** 11.—^e See **1 Chron.** 3, 15, with **2 Kings** 23, 30.—^f **2 Kings** 23, 34.

the wickedness of these men. God has his plan: they have theirs. His purpose is always good, while that of his human agents may be evil.

8, 9. Compare Deut. xxix, 23-26, and **1 Kings** ix, 8.

THREE KINGS—SHALLUM, JEHOIAKIM, AND CONIAH, 10-30.

10. Weep ye not for the dead—The noble king Josiah, slain in battle; but rather weep for his still more unfortunate son, who **goeth away** into captivity. In this reference to Jehoahaz is foreshadowed the misery which awaits the whole people.

11. Shallum—Attention is at once arrested by this name, which is applied to Josiah's son and successor, Jehoiakim. In one other place (**2 Chron.** iii, 15,) he is so called: in other passages his name is Jehoahaz. Why is he here called Shallum? Some say, 1) Because, from the brevity of his reign, he so much resembles Shallum of Israel. See **2 Kings** xv, 12, (Graf, Hitzig, *et al.*) This is fanciful in the extreme. Jeremiah does not write in this way. 2) To mark him as the man whom the Lord had requited for his evil doings. (SHALLUM: *the requited*—Hengstenberg.) But this explanation is untenable, inasmuch as the name Shallum appears in the genealogical table, **1 Chron.** iii, 15. 3) We are forced to conclude that Shallum was probably the original name of this man, and that he took the name Jehoahaz (*Jehovah holds*) on ascending the throne. Here,

his father, ^a which went forth out of this place; He shall not return thither any more: **12** But he shall die in the place whither they have led him captive, and shall see this land no more.

13 ^b Woe unto him that buildeth his house by unrighteousness, and his chambers by wrong; ^c that useth his neighbour's service without wages, and giveth him not for his work; **14** That saith, I will build me a wide house and ^d large chambers, and cutteth him out ^e windows; and ^f it is ceiled with cedar, and painted with vermilion. **15** Shalt

^a **2 Kings** 23, 35: verse 18.—^b **Lev.** 19, 13; Deut. 24, 14, 15; Micah 3, 10; Hab. 2, 9; James 5, 4.—^c **2 Heb.** *through aired*.—^d **3 Or,** *my windows*.

however, as the meaning of the old name is specially appropriate, Jeremiah employs it.

13. Woe unto him, etc.—Namely, Jehoiakim. This woe is pronounced because of the ruinous taxation of the people. This was for two objects—the payment of the tribute exacted by Pharaoh-Necho, and the building of a magnificent palace for himself. “He lived in splendour in the midst of the people's misery, and finally perished miserably at the age of thirty-six, so little cared for that his body was cast aside without burial.”

14. Wide house—Literally, *a house of dimensions*, or extensions—a grand palace. **Cutteth him out windows**—The verb is the same which is used in chapter iv, 30, of enlarging or opening the eyes with paint. The word rendered “windows” presents a difficulty, in that it seems to have the suffix of the first person, which here gives no sense at all. Different solutions have been proposed, but the simplest and best is that of Fürst, Keil, and others, which takes this as the primary form of a derivative word having the general sense of “window work.” The architectural force of the expression is thus manifest. **Ceiled**—Used in **1 Kings** vi, 9, and vii, 3, in the sense of *roofing*, which is the sense here. **Vermilion**—See also Ezek. xxiii, 14. It was either red lead or sulphuret of mercury. The sculptures of Nineveh still attest the beauty and permanency of this pigment.

thou reign, because thou closest *thyself* in cedar? ^a did not thy father eat and drink, and do judgment and justice, and then ^a *it was well with him*? **16** He judged the cause of the poor and needy; then ^a *it was well with him*: was not this to know me? saith the LORD. **17** ^a But thine eyes and thine heart *are* not but for thy covetousness, and for to shed innocent blood, and for oppression, and for ^a violence, to do *it*. **18** Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah; ^a They shall not lament for him, *saying*, ^a Ah my brother! or, Ah sister! they shall not lament for him, *saying*, Ah lord! or, Ah his glory! **19** ^a He shall be buried with the burial of an ass, drawn and cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem.

^a 2 Kings 23. 25. — ^r Psa. 128. 2; Isa. 3. 10. — ^s Ezek. 19. 6. — ^t Or. *incursion*. — ^u Chap. 16. 4, 6. — ^v See 1 Kings 13. 30. Fulfilled 599. — ^w 2 Chron. 36. 6; chap. 36. 30. — ^x Heb. *prosperities*.

15. Shalt thou reign, etc.—Not as some interpret, Shalt thou protract thy reign by palace building? but, Does kingcraft consist in this at all? The prophet alludes to Josiah to point the contrast. *He* established his power, not by the splendours of his public works, but by doing judgment and justice. **Thou closest**—Rather, *viest* in costly erections of cedar.

17. But thine eyes, etc.—Thou rulest for thine own selfish emolument or cruel and revengeful gratification; thy father ruled for the good of his people.

18, 19. Not lament... Ah my brother—Neither relations nor subjects will lament his death. Like a dead ass his body will be dragged out, and left to decay unburied and unheeded. There is no minute account of the death of this king, and hence we have no historical illustration of the fulfilment of this prophecy.

20. Go up—A passage is here interjected, (20–23,) in which the prophet speaks with touching pathos of the fate of Judah. So far from marring, it actually contributes to the higher unity of the chapter: for the commonwealth is ever present to the prophet's mind; and as he details one unworthy kingly history after another, it adds to the effectiveness of the whole that he should pause in the

20 Go up to Lebanon, and cry; and lift up thy voice in Bashan, and cry from the passages: for all thy lovers are destroyed. **21** I spake unto thee in thy ^a prosperity; but thou saidst, I will not hear. ^a This *hath been* thy manner from thy youth, that thou obeyedst not my voice. **22** The wind shall eat up all ^a thy pastors, and ^a thy lovers shall go into captivity: surely then shalt thou be ashamed and confounded for all thy wickedness. **23** O ^a inhabitant of Lebanon, that makest thy nest in the cedars, how gracious shalt thou be when pangs come upon thee, ^a the pain as of a woman in travail! **24** As I live, saith the LORD, ^a though Coniah the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah ^b were the signet upon my right hand, yet would I pluck thee thence; **25** ^a And I will

^a Chap. 3. 25; 7. 23, etc. — ^a Chap. 23. 1. — ^v Verse 20. — ^b Heb. *inhabitant*. — ^c Chap. 6. 24. — ^a See 2 Kings 24. 6. 8; 1 Chron. 3. 16; chap. 37. 1. — ^b Cant. 8. 6; Hagai 2. 23. — ^c Chap. 34. 20.

midst of these illustrations of kingly apostasy to think of the people and the kingdom whose interests were so disastrously affected by them. **Lebanon... Bashan... passages**—Rather, *Abarim*, as in the standard Version. The mountains that bordered on Palestine: Lebanon on the north; Bashan, northeast; Abarim, southeast.

21. Thy prosperity—Literally, *prosperities*; that is, times of prosperity, or possibly the many conditions which go to make up prosperity.

22. The wind shall eat up, etc.—There is here a play upon words, of which the common Version gives no glimpse: depasture thy **pastors**—eat up thy feeders. As the parching east wind eats up the grass, so shall the fire of war consume the “pastors” (that is, the leaders) of the people.

23. Inhabitant of Lebanon—That is, Jerusalem, so called in double allusion to her buildings of cedar and her sense of loftiness and security. **How gracious**—Rather, *how wilt thou groan!*

24. Coniah—Abbreviated from Jehoniah, his personal, as Jehoiachim was his official, designation. **As I live**—Thus giving to his utterance concerning him special solemnity and emphasis. **Signet**—A precious and almost indispensable article of attire

give thee into the hand of them that seek thy life, and into the hand of *them* whose face thou fearest, even into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, and into the hand of the Chaldeans.

26 ^d And I will cast thee out, and thy mother that bare thee, into another country, where ye were not born; and there shall ye die. **27** But to the land whereunto they ^e desire to return, thither shall they not return. **28** *Is* this man Coniah a despised broken idol? *is* he ^f a vessel wherein *is* no pleasure? wherefore are they cast out, he and his seed, and are cast into a land which they know not? **29** 'O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the LORD. **30** Thus saith the LORD, Write ye this

man ^g childless, a man *that* shall not prosper in his days: for no man of his seed shall prosper, ^h sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah.

CHAPTER XXIII.

WOE ⁱ be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! saith the LORD. **2** Therefore thus saith the LORD God of Israel against the pastors that feed my people; Ye have scattered my flock, and driven them away, and have not visited them: ^j behold, I will visit upon you the evil of your doings, saith the LORD. **3** And ^k I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all countries whither I have driven them, and will bring them again to

^d 2 Kings 24. 15; 2 Chron. 36. 10. — ^e 7 Heb. *lift up their mind*, chap. 44. 14. — ^f *Ps* a. 31. 12; chap. 48. 38; Hosea 8. 8. — ^g Deut. 32. 1; Isa. 1. 2; 34. 1; Micah 1. 2.

^g See 1 Chron. 3. 16, 17; Matt. 1. 12. — ^h Chap. 36. 30. — ⁱ Chap. 10. 21; 22. 22; Ezek. 34. 2. — ^j Exod. 32. 34. — ^k Chap. 32. 37; Ezek. 34. 23, etc.

— a ring or seal. See Haggai ii, 23. Not only had it intrinsic value, but it was a badge of official authority.

26. Thy mother—See 2 Kings xxiv, 8, and chapter xxix, 2. On the fulfilment of this threatening, see 2 Kings xxiv, 12, 15, and chapters xxiv, 1, xxix, 2.

28. Idol—Rather, *vessel*. Is the king a mere piece of broken and worthless pottery?

29. Earth, earth, earth—The triple repetition marks the most solemn emphasis. See chap. vii, 4; Isaiah vi, 3; Ezekiel xxi, 32.

30. Childless—As one with whom his stock becomes extinct—who has no posterity. This may be as a man, or as a king; but the latter sense seems most strictly relevant. This would not preclude the fact of children, and they would seem to be implied by verse 28, "his seed."

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE GATHERING AGAIN OF THE FLOCK, 1-8.

1. Pastors—*Shepherds*. The term seems sometimes to be used with reference to subordinate civil rulers, as in chaps. ii, 8, xxii, 22, and yet, perhaps, more commonly in a generic sense, covering all leaders or persons of influence—prophets, priests, and civil rulers. **Sheep of my pasture**—*My sheep*. The flock belongs to God,

who only is the true Shepherd; all others derive their authority from him.

2. The pastors—In the first verse the article is not in the original, and is incorrectly introduced into the Version. It is a general principle. Woe to shepherds—any and all shepherds—when they destroy and scatter the sheep; that is, when they themselves do that which they are specially set to prevent. But in this verse the article is used to identify those to whom this woe now applies. **Scattered... driven**—As the wolf does. The Eastern shepherd does not *drive* his flock, but "goeth before them."

3. I have driven—Here God appropriates to himself the very term he had just applied to the evil shepherds to their blame. So we have brought into view two aspects of the same event. So Joseph said to his brethren, "Not you sent me hither, but God," Gen. xiv, 8: a statement that seems the exact opposite of the truth, and yet was most profoundly and exactly true. The real meaning is, *Not so much you as God*. The event turns one of its faces toward those wicked men, Joseph's brethren; but another, and a totally different one, toward God. So here. These shepherds, by their neglect, had scattered and destroyed the flock; on the other hand God, for the sins of this very flock, drove them into exile.

their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase. **4** And I will set up "shepherds over them which shall feed them: and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall they be lacking, saith the LORD.

5 Behold, "the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, "and shall execute

d Chap. 3. 15; Ezek. 34. 23, etc.—*e* Isa. 4. 2; 11. 1; 40. 10, 11; chap. 33. 14, 15, 16; Dan. 9. 24; Zech. 3. 8; 6. 12; John 1. 45.—*f* Psa. 72. 2; Isa.

4. I will set up shepherds—Such men as Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah: but the higher fulfilment of this prophetic promise is reserved for Messianic times.

5. In the midst of this fearful gloom, most unexpectedly and refreshingly are we favoured with a vision of supernal glory. The words of this passage break upon our ears sweetly and cheerfully as the angels' song upon the ears of the shepherds. In this extremity of despair the light of God's blessed consolation beams with ineffable beauty. In none of the prophets, not even in Isaiah. "the evangelic prophet," is there a brighter gleam of the "latter-day glory." **Behold**—A formal opening, indicating the importance of what is announced. **Days come**—Literally, *days (are) coming*: pointing to some indefinite future. **Branch**—See Isa. iv, 2; and, for the force of the word, Gen. xix, 25; Isa. lxi, 11; Ezek. xvi, 7; xvii, 9; Hos. viii, 7. The original in Isa. xi, 1, is a different word, and quite distinct in meaning. It is unfortunate that both are represented by the same word in the Authorized Version. The term here employed signifies a sprout or shoot sent up from the root, and is strikingly expressive of the Messiah's relation to the Davidic dynasty. Of this line nothing was left but the vital root, and yet from this Christ came. The branches had been cut off, the stately trunk was prostrate and dead, but from the hidden root a new shoot came forth of supernal beauty and immortal vigour. **A King shall reign**—Rather, *that shall reign as king*, the sentence resting directly on the word "branch." Isa. lii, 13; Dan. ix, 24, etc.

judgment and justice in the earth. **6** "In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel "shall dwell safely: and "this is his name whereby he shall be called, **THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.** **7** Therefore, behold, "the days come, saith the LORD, that they shall no more say, The LORD liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; **8** But, The LORD liveth, which

9. 7; 32. 1, 18.—*g* Deut. 33. 28; Zech. 14. 11.—*h* Chap. 32. 37.—*i* Chap. 33. 16; 1 Cor. 1. 30.—*j* Heb. *Jehovah-tsidkenu*.—*k* Chap. 16. 14, 15.

6. Judah... Israel—The prophet writes as though Israel had not been destroyed; and this was true in a sense deeper and more spiritual than that in which she had been destroyed. The passing away of her political power was a mere incident. The spiritual results of the long centuries of divine tuition and discipline were still conserved. There had been reared a temple of spiritual truth which even the shock of war could not cast down. Israel and Judah are still complementary parts of God's indestructible Church. **Whereby he shall be called**—Literally, *he shall call him, or one shall call him*. The subject is either Jehovah understood, or the verb is impersonal, which is the preferable view. The object "he" is clearly the Personage of the preceding verse. A few commentators, mainly because of xxxiii, 16, refer it to the Jewish people, but most unwarrantably. **The Lord our Righteousness**—"Though the Hebrew language admitted into ordinary appellations the name of the Deity, yet this is the case solely in compound, and never in uncompound, names. Such are either memorials of some great event, (for instance, Gen. vi, 14, xxii, 14, Exod. xvii, 15, Judges vi, 24, etc.,) or virtual promises of some future deliverance, as Jer. xxxiii, 16, Ezek. xlvi, 35; or names of the Deity, as in Isa. vii, 16, ix, 6." (Dean Smith, *in loc.*) The import of the name is, that Jehovah will, by the Messiah, establish among his people a reign of righteousness. The phrase does not look directly to outward and technical justification, but to holiness of heart and life.

7, 8, Repetition of chap. xvi, 14, 15.

brought up and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, ¹and from all countries whither I had driven them; and they shall dwell in their own land.

9 Mine heart within me is broken because of the prophets; ^mall my bones shake: I am like a drunken man, and like a man whom wine hath overcome, because of the Lord, and because of the words of his holiness. **10** For ⁿthe land is full of adulterers; for ^obecause of ²swearing the land mourneth; ^pthe pleasant places of the wilderness are dried up, and their ³course is evil, and their force *is* not right. **11** For ^qboth prophet and priest are profane; yea, ^rin my house have I found their wickedness, saith the Lord. **12** ^sWherefore their way shall be unto them as slippery ways in the darkness: they shall be driven on, and fall therein: for I ^twill bring evil upon them, *even* the year of their visitation, saith the Lord. **13** And I have seen ⁴⁵ folly in the

prophets of Samaria; ^uthey prophesied in Baal, and ^vcaused my people Israel to err. **14** I have seen also in the prophets of Jerusalem ^aa horrible thing: ^wthey commit adultery, and ^xwalk in lies; they ^ystrengthen also the hands of evil doers, that none doth return from his wickedness: they are all of them unto me as ²Sodom, and the inhabitants thereof as Gomorrah. **15** Therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts concerning the prophets; Behold, I will feed them with ^awormwood, and make them drink the water of gall: for from the prophets of Jerusalem is ⁷profaneness gone forth into all the land. **16** Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Harken not unto the words of the prophets that prophesy unto you; they make you vain: ^bthey speak a vision of their own heart, and not out of the mouth of the Lord. **17** They say still unto them that despise me, The Lord hath said, ^cYe shall have peace; and they say unto every one that walketh

¹ Isa. 43. 5, 6; ver. 3. — ^m See Hab. 3. 16. — ⁿ Chap. 5. 7, 8; 9. 2. — ^o Hosea 4. 2, 3. — ² Or, *curving*. — ^p Chap. 9. 10; 12. 4. — ³ Or, *violence*. — ^q Chap. 6. 13; 8. 10; Zeph. 3. 4. — ^r Chap. 7. 30; 11. 15; 32. 34; Ezek. 8. 11; 23. 39. — ^s Psal. 35. 6; Prov. 4. 19; chap. 13. 16. — ^t Chap. 11. 23.

⁴ Or, *an absurd thing*. — ⁵ Heb. *unsavory*. — ^u Chap. 3. 8. — ^v Isa. 9. 16. — ^w Or, *filthiness*. — ^x Chap. 29. 25. — ^y Ver. 26. — ^z Ezek. 13. 22. — ^a Deut. 32. 32; Isa. 1. 9, 10. — ^b Chap. 8. 14; 9. 15. — ⁷ Or, *hypocrisy*. — ^c Chap. 14. 14; ver. 21. — ^c Chap. 6. 14; 8. 11; Ezek. 13. 10; Zech. 10. 2.

THE FALSE PROPHETS, 9-40.

9. This verse is tamely rendered in the Authorized Version. Its opening sentences stand: *Concerning the prophets, broken is my heart within me; all my bones shake.* The same radical word which is here rendered **shake**, is, in Gen. i, 2, "moved," and in Deut. xxxii, 11, "fluttereth." The sense here is, to shake in a helpless and tottering manner, and so is kindred to the following sentence: **I am like a drunken man.**

10. Adulterers—Taken literally as a specimen-aspect of the prevalent immorality. **Because of swearing**—Rather, *because of the curse*. **Mourneth**—Literally, *withereth*. **Their force is not right**—That is, their prowess is on the side of wrong.

11. Both prophet and priest are profane—Instead of being specially holy, they are specially wicked. Even into the very temple covetousness and impurity had come. See 2 Kings xxiii, 12; Ezek. xxiii, 39; Zeph. iii, 4.

12. Slippery ways in the dark-

ness—In the rough and uneven country of Palestine, full of difficult and dangerous paths, most naturally do the perils of travel contribute to its imagery. Such language in the Bible has a force and expressiveness which the modern dwellers in civilized lands, with good roads and abundant facilities for safe and expeditious travel, can but imperfectly realize. See Psal. lxxiii, 2, 18; xxxv, 6; xxxviii, 17; lxxvi, 9; cxxi, 3, etc., etc. **Driven on**—Rather, *thrust down*.

13, 14. Prophets of Samaria—Here introduced to set off the greater folly of the prophets of Jerusalem. These last are represented as having come to the very climax of wickedness, even as Sodom and Gomorrah.

15. See chap. viii, 14; ix, 15.

16, 17. Thus saith the Lord—Having denounced punishment against the false prophets, Jeremiah now warns the people against them. His charges against them are summed up in two: 1) **They speak a vision of their own heart**; 2) **They say . . . Ye shall have peace.**

after the ⁸imagination of his own heart, ⁹"No evil shall come upon you. 18 For ⁹who hath stood in the ⁹counsel of the Lord, and hath perceived and heard his word? who hath marked his word, and heard it? 19 Behold, a ⁹whirlwind of the Lord is gone forth in fury, even a grievous whirlwind: it shall fall grievously upon the head of the wicked. 20 The ⁹anger of the Lord shall not return, until he have executed, and till he have performed the thoughts of his heart: ¹⁰"in the latter days ye shall consider it perfectly. 21 ¹¹"I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran: I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied. 22 But if they had ¹²stood in my counsel, and had caused my people to hear my words, then they should have ¹³turned them from their evil way, and from the evil of their doings. 23 *Am* I a God at hand, saith the Lord, and not a God afar off? 24 Can any ¹⁴hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the Lord. ¹⁵"Do not I

⁸ Or, *stubbornness*, chap. 13. 10. — ⁹ *d* Micah 3. 11. — ¹⁰ *e* Job 15. 8; 1 Cor. 2. 16. — ¹¹ Or, *secret*. — ¹² *f* Chap. 25. 32; 30. 25. — ¹³ *g* Chap. 30. 24. — ¹⁴ *h* Gen. 49. 1. — ¹⁵ *i* Chap. 14. 14; 27. 15; 29. 9. — *k* Ver. 18.

18. **His word**—Should be, *my word*; the Masoretes having changed the person because of the apparent grammatical difficulty.

19. **A whirlwind**—So far from this vision of peace and prosperity being true, *the tempest of Jehovah—even fury—goeth forth, and a whirlwind shall hurt itself upon the head of the wicked.*

20. **Anger of the Lord**—This wrath of God is resistless. He will certainly perform **the thoughts of his heart**. And when these plans of God are actually wrought out into completion they will be understood.

21, 22. These false prophets **ran** as if with a message from the Almighty. They hurried with indecent levity to assume those grave responsibilities. Had they been really of God they would have **turned them** (the people) **from their evil way**. No man going on God's errand need meet with failure or defeat. The test of "fruit," when rightly applied, is an infallible one.

23. **A God at hand**—Am I one whose knowledge and power are hedged in by the limitations of time and space? Am I one from whom anything,

fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord. 25 I have heard what the prophets said, that prophesy lies in my name, saying, I have dreamed, I have dreamed. 26 How long shall *this* be in the heart of the prophets that prophesy lies? yea, *they are* prophets of the deceit of their own heart; 27 Which think to cause my people to forget my name by their dreams, which they tell every man to his neighbour, ¹⁶as their fathers have forgotten my name for Baal. 28 The prophet ¹⁷that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord. 29 *Is* not my word like as a fire? saith the Lord; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces? 30 Therefore, behold, ¹⁸*I am* against the prophets, saith the Lord, that steal my words every one from his neighbour. 31 Behold, *I am* against the prophets, saith the Lord, ¹⁹that use their tongues, and say, He saith. 32 Behold, *I am*

¹⁶ Chap. 25. 5. — ¹⁷ *m* Psal. 139. 7, etc.; Amos 9. 2, 3. — ¹⁸ *n* 1 Kings 8. 27; Psal. 139. 7. — ¹⁹ *o* Judges 3. 7; 8. 33, 34. — ²⁰ Heb. *with whom is*. — ²¹ *p* Deut. 18. 20; chap. 14. 14, 15. — ²² Or, *that smooth their tongues.*

even the most secret, can be hid, and hence be ignorant of the lying predictions of these prophecy-mongers?

26. **How long**, etc.—Rather, *How long? Is it in the minds of the prophets that prophesy falsehood in my name—the prophets of the deceit of their heart?* Impatient of their impious audacity Jeremiah cries out, "How long?" and then draws out his question more explicitly.

28. **Let him tell a dream**—That is, as "a dream," and not as the word of God. Ordinary dreams are but as **chaff**, while the divine word is vital and life-sustaining as the **wheat**.

29. **Fire... hammer**—That which is "wheat" to the believer is but as a consuming **fire** to the "chaff" of false prophesyings, and a resistless "hammer" to all opposing obstructions.

30–32. Some of the leading characteristics of false prophets are here grouped together. *a*) They **steal my words every one from his neighbour**; which has been aptly described as a twofold plagiarism—one steals from another, but all from God's true prophets. *b*) They **say, He saith**.

against them that prophesy false dreams, saith the LORD, and do tell them, and cause my people to err by their lies, and by ⁹ their lightness: yet I sent them not, nor commanded them: therefore they shall not profit this people at all, saith the LORD.

33 And when this people, or the prophet, or a priest, shall ask thee, saying, What is ¹ the burden of the LORD? thou shalt then say unto them, What burden? ² I will even forsake you, saith the LORD. **34** And as for the prophet, and the priest, and the people, that shall say, The burden of the LORD, I will even ¹² punish that man and his house. **35** Thus shall ye say every one to his neighbour, and every one to his brother, What hath the LORD answered? and, What hath the LORD spoken?

q Zeph. 3. 4.—*r* Mal. 1. 1.—*s* Verse 39.—*12* Heb. *cisil upon*.

They give out their sayings as God's. *c*) They have pretended revelations—**prophesy false dreams.** *d*) Finally and fatally, they **cause my people to err by their lies, and by their lightness**—That is, their boastful pretensions.

33. Burden of the Lord—This phrase occurs many times in the titles of Isaiah's prophecies, and in the prophecies of Nahum, Habakkuk, Zechariah, and Malachi. It is never used by Jeremiah except, as here, in quoting the language of others and replying to it. Hence the enemies of the prophet must have used it by way of derision. The import of the term has been the subject of some difference of opinion. It comes from נָשָׂא, (*nasah*),

to lift up, and either implies a saying of weighty and dread import, one that must be taken up as "a burden," or one which was announced by lifting up the voice. These two explanations coincide to a great extent, for that which should be proclaimed with a loud voice would be a matter of grave importance. But a careful study of the passages in which this term is employed will disclose the fact that, for whatever reason, the application of the term is to prophecies of a minatory character, so that the word, as here used, contained a sneering satire on

36 And the burden of the LORD shall ye mention no more; for every man's word shall be his burden: for ye have perverted the words of the living God, of the LORD of hosts our God. **37** Thus shalt thou say to the prophet, What hath the LORD answered thee? and, What hath the LORD spoken? **38** But since ye say, The burden of the LORD; therefore thus saith the LORD; Because ye say this word, The burden of the LORD, and I have sent unto you, saying, Ye shall not say, The burden of the LORD; **39** Therefore, behold, I, even I, ¹ will utterly forget you, and ² I will forsake you, and the city that I gave you and your fathers, and cast you out of my presence: **40** And I will bring ³ an everlasting reproach upon you, and a perpetual shame, which shall not be forgotten.

t Hosea 4. 6.—*u* Verse 33.—*v* Chapter 20. 11.

Jeremiah's work. **What burden**—An echo or repetition of their question, in order to join the answer to it with more telling effect. The Septuagint here translates, *ye are the burden*, a reading which requires no change of the Hebrew consonants, but only a different division of them; and many commentators have preferred to follow it in this place, but unwisely, and with strange disregard of the special untrustworthiness of the Septuagint in this book. **I will...forsake you**—Literally, *I will cast you off*—I will disburden myself of you.

36. Every man's word shall be his burden—The word "burden" shall have, to him who uses it tauntingly against my faithful prophet, a crushing fulfilment.

39. I...will utterly forget you—As you have forgotten me. Another reading of this text is preferred by many, but without sufficient reason.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE SYMBOL—Two FIG-BASKETS, 1-3.

This passage is distinguished, first of all, by the very definite note of time with which it commences, and its contemptuous treatment of the reigning sovereign, Zedekiah. Those who are gone into captivity are the *good figs* upon which God will continue to look with kindly remembrance,

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE ^aLORD showed me, and, behold, two baskets of figs were set before the temple of the LORD, after that Nebuchadrezzar ^bking of Babylon had carried away captive ^cJehooniah the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah, and the princes of Judah, with the carpenters and smiths, from Jerusalem, and had brought them to Babylon. **2** One basket had very good figs, even like the figs that are first ripe: and the other basket had very naughty figs, which could not be eaten, ¹they were so bad. **3** Then said the LORD unto me, What seest thou, Jeremiah? And I said, Figs; the good figs, very good: and the evil, very evil, that cannot be eaten, they are so evil.

^a Amos 7. 1, 4; 8. 1.—^b 2 Kings 24. 12, etc.; 2 Chron. 36. 10.—^c See chap. 22. 24, etc.; 29. 2.—¹ Heb. *for badness*.—² Heb. *the captivity*.—^d Chap. 12. 15; 29. 10.

and will bring them again to their own land; while those that remain are but as refuse and worthless fruit.

1. Showed me—In prophetic vision. **Set before the temple of the Lord**—That is, specially and eminently in the divine presence. Into this place Israel had come by the divine election, and she must endure the tests appropriate to the position. **The carpenters and smiths**—Carried to Babylon, both to weaken Jerusalem and to increase the resources of Babylon. 2 Kings xxiv, 16.

2. First ripe—The fig-tree bears three crops: the first, which ripened in June, being considered specially choice. (Compare Isa. xxviii, 4, and Hos. ix, 10.) **Naughty figs**—Possibly because decayed, or, more suitably to the scope of the passage, fruit essentially poor, such, for instance, as the sycamore figs, which, unless they are punctured as they ripen, cannot be eaten.

THE INTERPRETATION OF THE SYMBOL, 4-10.

4, 5. Like . . . good figs—These figs represent those Judahites who have been carried away into captivity. They are "good"—not absolutely, but comparatively.

6. Set mine eyes upon them—Namely, for good, that is, to do good to them, not only by preparing their

4 Again the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, **5** Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel; Like these good figs, so will I acknowledge ²them that are carried away captive of Judah, whom I have sent out of this place into the land of the Chaldeans for *their* good. **6** For I will set mine eyes upon them for good, and ^aI will bring them again to this land: and ^aI will build them, and not pull *them* down; and I will plant them, and not pluck *them* up. **7** And I will give them ^aa heart to know me, that I *am* the LORD; and they shall be ^amy people, and I will be their God: for they shall return unto me ^bwith their whole heart.

8 And as the evil ^cfigs, which cannot

^e Chap. 32. 41; 33. 7; 42. 10.—^f Deut. 30. 6; chap. 32. 39; Ezek. 11. 19; 36. 26, 27.—^g Chap. 30. 22; 31. 33; 32. 38.—^h Chap. 29. 13.—ⁱ Chap. 29. 17.

way before them, thus making their abode in the land of exile tolerable, but especially by bringing them into more full possession of their spiritual heritage. **Will bring them again**—These words contain a meaning deeper and richer than a mere literal return to Palestine. For, as a matter of fact, to the great mass of the people this promise, in this sense, had no fulfilment at all. A mere remnant of those carried away came back, but, for the great body of the people, the captivity was the beginning of a dispersion which has continued till this present time. The higher and more universal import of these words was spiritual. By going away into exile, and submitting to the hard discipline of the captivity, they came into the land of promise. God cast down the scaffolding of their political life, in order that the temple of spiritual truth might stand forth in all its divine beauty. He removed the merely mechanical and earthly pressure which held the people together, in order that the forces of life might have freer play. He destroyed them as a nation to exalt them as a people. That this is the sense here intended is evident from the seventh verse—words, the full blessedness of which can never be exhausted.

8. But as one throws away **evil figs**, so God will throw away **Zede-**

be eaten, they are so evil; surely thus saith the LORD, So will I give Zedekiah the king of Judah, and his princes, and the residue of Jerusalem, that remain in this land, and * them that dwell in the land of Egypt: **9** And I will deliver them ² to ¹ be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth for *their* hurt, ^m to be a reproach and a proverb, a taunt ^a and a curse, in all places whither I shall drive them. **10** And I will send the sword, the famine, and the pestilence, among them, till they be consumed from off the land that I gave unto them and to their fathers.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the people of Judah,

k See chaps. 43, 44.—*3* Heb. *for removing, or, revocation.*—*l* Deut. 28, 25, 37; 1 Kings 9, 7; 2 Chron. 7, 20; chap. 15, 4; 29, 18; 34, 17.—*m* Psu. 44, 13, 14.—*n* Chap. 29, 18, 22.—*a* Chap.

kiah and his princes. Even those who have taken refuge in **Egypt** are remembered in this curse. The language here used is taken substantially from Deut. xxviii, 25, 37, which see.

CHAPTER XXV.

INTRODUCTORY, 1-3.

1. This chapter is dated with unusual exactness, not only the year of **Jehoiakim king of Judah**, but also that of **Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon**, being specified. Other examples of dates similarly complete are chapters xxvi, 1; xxviii, 1; xxxii, 1; xxxix, 1, etc. The mention of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon marks the overshadowing influence of this great eastern power. **Fourth year of Jehoiakim**, etc.—In Daniel i, 1, the *third* year of Jehoiakim is identified with the first year of Nebuchadrezzar. The explanation of this discrepancy—which is so slight as to be really a confirmation—is, that the fourth year of Jehoiakim was but partly coincident with the first year of Nebuchadrezzar. Hales, in his Chronology, makes Jehoiakim's reign commence July, 607 B. C., and Nebuchadrezzar's in January, 604 B. C. It hence appears that the prophecy dates in that memorable year which was the turning-point in the history of the East. The decisive battle of Carchemish established the ascendancy of Babylon

^a in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, that *was* the first year of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon; **2** The which Jeremiah the prophet spake unto all the people of Judah, and to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying, **3** ^b From the thirteenth year of Josiah the son of Amon king of Judah, even unto this day, that *is* the three and twentieth year, the word of the LORD hath come unto me, and I have spoken unto you, rising early and speaking; ^c but ye have not hearkened. **4** And the LORD hath sent unto you all his servants the prophets, ^d rising early and sending *them*; but ye have not hearkened, nor inclined your ear to hear. **5** They said, ^e Turn ye

36, 1.—*b* Chap. 1, 2, from 629 till 606.—*c* Chap. 7, 13; 11, 7, 8, 10; 13, 10, 11; 16, 12; 17, 23; 18, 12; 19, 15; 22, 21.—*d* Chap. 7, 13, 25; 26, 5; 29, 19.—*e* 2 Kings 17, 13; chap. 18, 11; 35, 15; Jonah 3, 8.

in Syria and Palestine, and sealed the fate of the Jewish nation. Immediately thereafter Jerusalem was taken, and her principal inhabitants carried away captive. Shortly after this capture of Jerusalem, by the death of Nabopolassar Nebuchadrezzar succeeded to the throne, January, 604 B. C. Thus is the general date of this prophecy most memorable; marking the battle of Carchemish, the capture of Jerusalem, the beginning of the seventy years' captivity, the accession of Nebuchadrezzar to the Babylonian throne, and the permanent ascendancy of the power of the Euphrates over that of the Nile; for never again does Egypt resume her old place among the great nations of the earth.

3. From the thirteenth year of Josiah, etc.—Appropriately marking the crisis, the prophet takes a retrospective glance. For twenty-three years he had patiently and persistently preached repentance to this unwilling and persecuting people: and hence they cannot now say that their calamities come without warning. These three and twenty years are made up of nineteen under Josiah and four of Jehoiakim, including the three months' reign of Jehoahaz.

THE JUDGMENT ON JUDAH, 4-11.

4. The Lord...sent, etc.—Thus demonstrating his love and long-suffering.

again now every one from his evil way, and from the evil of your doings, and dwell in the land that the LORD hath given unto you and to your fathers for ever and ever: **6** And go not after other gods to serve them, and to worship them, and provoke me not to anger with the works of your hands; and I will do you no hurt. **7** Yet ye have not hearkened unto me, saith the LORD; that ye might 'provoke me to anger with the works of your hands to your own hurt.

8 Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts; Because ye have not heard my words, **9** Behold, I will send and take ^eall the families of the north, saith the LORD, and Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon, ^hmy servant, and will bring them against this land, and against the inhabitants thereof, and against all these nations round about, and will utterly

destroy them, and ⁱmake them an astonishment, and a hissing, and perpetual desolations. **10** Moreover ^jI will take from them the ^kvoice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, ^lthe sound of the millstones, and the light of the candle. **11** And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years.

12 And it shall come to pass, ^mwhen ⁿseventy years are accomplished, *that* I will ^opunish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the LORD, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, ^pand will make it perpetual desolations. **13** And I will bring upon that land all my words which I have pronounced against it, *even* all that is written in this book, which Jeremiah hath

^fDeut. 32, 21; chap. 7, 19; 22, 30.—^gChap. 1, 15.—^hChap. 27, 6; 43, 10; see Isa. 44, 28; 45, 1; chap. 40, 2.—ⁱChap. 18, 16.—^j1 Heb. *I will cause to perish from them*.—^kIsa. 24, 7; chap. 7, 34; 16, 9; Ezek. 26, 13; Hosea 2, 11; Rev. 18, 23.

^lEccles. 12, 4.—^m2 Chron. 36, 21, 32; Ezra 1, 1; chap. 29, 10; Dan. 9, 2.—ⁿ* Beginning about 606; 2 Kings 24, 1. Ending about 536; Ezra 1, 1.—^o2 Heb. *visit upon*.—^pIsa. 13, 19; 14, 23; 21, 1, etc.; 47, 1; chap. 50, 3, 13, 23, 39, 40, 45; 51, 25, 26.

6. Compare chapters vii, 6, and i, 16.

9. Families of the north.—An allusion to the conglomerate character of the Babylonish kingdom, blending, as it did, all the peoples in the great basin of the Tigris and Euphrates. **And Nebuchadrezzar, etc.**—Literally, *and to Nebuchadrezzar, etc.*, bringing it after **send** rather than **take**, in construction. He is called the **servant** of Jehovah because of his providential mission in executing God's will on Judah. See also chapters xxviii, 6; xliii, 10.

11. Seventy years.—Used not as a round number, nor primarily for its symbolical import, but with chronological exactness. The accuracy of this number is attested by both sacred and profane chronology. It begins with the fourth year of Jehoiakim, 606 B. C., and extends to the first year of Cyrus, 536 B. C. The whole period of the Babylonian empire after the fall of Nineveh was about sixty-seven years. Add the two years of Darius the Mede, (Dan. vi, 1,) and we have about sixty-nine years for the captivity before the accession of Cyrus, near the beginning of whose reign came the decree of release and res-

toration. See an excellent *résumé* of the chronological data in Keil's Commentary.

JUDGMENT ON BABYLON AND OTHER NATIONS, 12-29.

12. When seventy years are accomplished.—Babylon was captured 538 B. C., just sixty-eight years after the capture of Jerusalem. **Perpetual desolations.**—To none other of the great powers of the ancient world do these words apply so impressively and absolutely. The utter nothingness to which this vast empire has returned is not relieved even by interesting and valuable monumental remains, as in the case of Nineveh, and especially of Egypt.

13. Written in this book.—The difficulties in this verse have been exaggerated. On the one hand, there can be no question that this language implies the existence of a written book of Jeremiah, and is not satisfied with a merely spoken discourse. But words at first spoken more fully are here reduced to a condensed written record, in which the identifying phrase "written in this book" occurs. That the passage directly mentions the

prophesied against all the nations. **14** ° For many nations ° and great kings shall ° serve themselves of them also: ° and I will recompense them according to their deeds, and according to the works of their own hands.

15 For thus saith the Lord God of Israel unto me; Take the ° wine-cup of this fury at my hand, and cause all the nations, to whom I send thee, to drink it. **16** And ° they shall drink, and be moved, and be mad, because of the sword that I will send among them. **17** Then took I the cup at the Lord's hand, and made all the nations to drink, unto whom the Lord had sent me:

o Chap. 50. 9; 51. 27, 28. — p Chap. 50. 41; 51. 27. — q Chap. 27. 7. — r Chap. 50. 29; 51. 6, 24. — s Job 21. 20; Psa. 75. 8; Isa. 51. 17; Rev. 14. 10. — t Chap. 51. 7; Ezr-k. 23. 31; Nahum 3. 11. — u Verses 9, 11. — v Chap. 24. 9.

prophecies which are to come has been too hastily assumed. **Against all the nations** is a phrase which is perfectly intelligible in its application to prophecies already recorded. But the Septuagint divides this thirteenth verse differently. Its arrangement is inconsistent with the Masoretic punctuation, but not with the original text, and strongly commends itself to favourable consideration. The preceding passage is made to terminate at **book**, and the sentence immediately following is the caption of the succeeding passage—*What Jeremiah prophesied against the nations*—a title which describes the subject-matter of the passage as far as the thirty-fourth verse. And yet, even with the Masoretic pointing, the difficulty is not serious.

14. Shall serve themselves—Shall make them, namely, the Chaldeans, their slaves. See chapters i, 29; li, 24.

15. Wine cup—"A flagon filled with wrath." See chapters xlix, 12; li, 7; Isa. li, 17, 22, etc. **Cause... the nations... to drink**—Not literally the representatives of the nations assembled at Jerusalem, as Michaelis explains, but symbolically, in prophetic vision. "As the wrath of God is no essence that may be drunk by the bodily act, so, manifestly, the cup is no material cup, and the drinking is no act of outer physical reality."—*Keil*.

18. Jerusalem—Mentioned first, as

18 *To wit*, Jerusalem, and the cities of Judah, and the kings thereof, and the princes thereof, to make them ° a desolation, an astonishment, a hissing, and ° a curse; as *it is* this day; **19** ° Pharaoh king of Egypt, and his servants, and his princes, and all his people; **20** And all ° the mingled people, and all the kings of ° the land of Uz, ° and all the kings of the land of the Philistines, and Ashkelon, and Azzah, and Ekion, and ° the remnant of Ashdod, **21** ° Edom, and ° Moab, and the children of ° Ammon, **22** And all the kings of ° Tyrus, and all the kings of Zidon, and the kings of the ° isles which are beyond the ° sea,

w Chap. 46. 2, 25. — x Verse 24. — y Job 1. 1. — z Chap. 47. 1, 5, 7. — a See Isa. 20. 1. — b Chap. 49. 7, etc. — c Chap. 48. 1. — d Chap. 49. 1. — e Chap. 47. 4. — f Or, region by the sea si e. — g Chap. 49. 23.

being most important, and perhaps, too, most guilty.

19. Pharaoh, etc.—The enumeration begins with Egypt and goes northward, mentioning Uz, Edom, Moab, and Ammon on the east, and Philistia, Tyre, Zidon, and the isles of the Mediterranean on the west. Then, to the far east, the kings of Arabia and Elam, with the Medes to the northward; and finally the enumeration terminates with **all the kings of the north and all the kingdoms of the world... upon the face of the earth**, but mentions last of all the king of Babylon by the name of **Sheshach**. (Vers. 19–26.)

20. Uz—This passage falls in with Lam. iv, 21, in fixing the locality of this land somewhere between the Egyptian border and Palestine, probably in the neighbourhood of Idumea. **Philistines**—The towns which are mentioned were probably capitals of separate principalities. Gath, which is elsewhere mentioned as one of the five royal cities of the Philistines, (Josh. xiii, 3; 1 Sam. vi, 17,) is not here mentioned, probably because it was no longer a capital city. The **remnant of Ashdod** was what had survived the twenty-nine years' siege of Psammeticus, and its capture and destruction. (Herod. ii, 157.)

22. Kings of Tyrus, etc. The plural is, in verse 18, xix, 3, xiii, 13, used to include the present kings and their successors. **Isles**, more exactly,

23 * Dedan, and Tema, and Buz, and all ⁴ that are in the utmost corners, **24** And ^h all the kings of Arabia, and all the kings of the ⁱ mingled people that dwell in the desert, **25** And all the kings of Zimri, and all the kings of ^k Elam, and all the kings of the Medes, **26** ^l And all the kings of the north, far and near, one with another, and all the kingdoms of the world, which are upon the face of the earth: ^m and the king of Sheshach shall drink after them.

g Chap. 49. 8. — *4* Heb. cut off into corners, or, having the corners of the hair polled: chap. 9. 26; 49. 32. — *h* 2 Chron. 9. 14. — *i* See verse 20: chap. 49. 31; 50. 37; Ezek. 30. 5. — *k* Chap. 49. 34. — *l* Chap. 50. 9.

as in the margin, region by the sea side, probably including generally the colonies in and upon the Mediterranean.

23. Dedan... Tema... Buz—Arabian tribes. **Utmost corners**, as in *li*, 25, should be *hair-corners polled*, or *who have the corners of their hair shorn*.

24. Arabia—A general name, not for the whole district now known by this name, but for that region occupied by the nomadic peoples descended from Ishmael and Midian.

25. Zimri—This name occurs only here; but from the order in which it is introduced we may safely conclude that it represents a people to the extreme east, between the Arabs and the Elamites. **Elam**—As is common in the Bible this name is not limited to Elymais, but is put for the whole of Persia. **Medes**—Located still farther to the north and east, and destined to hold a conspicuous place in the history of the near future.

26. Kings of the north—Completing the survey. **Sheshach**—See also *li*, 41. In the opinion of many we have here and in *li*, 1, an example of that cabalistic figure called the at-bash. This consisted in substituting for each letter in a word the letter holding the corresponding place counting from the other end of the alphabet, namely, for א (a'eph) ת (tav;) for כ (beth) ש (shin,) etc. On this plan Sheshach would answer to Babel, which it certainly means; and in *li*, 1, the words rendered "in the midst of them that rise up," literally, *heart of the risers up*, would answer to Chas-

27 Therefore thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; ⁿ Drink ye, and ^o be drunken, and spew, and fall, and rise no more, because of the sword which I will send among you. **28** And it shall be, if they refuse to take the cup at thine hand to drink, then shalt thou say unto them, Thus saith the Lord of hosts; Ye shall certainly drink. **29** For, lo, ^p I begin to bring evil on the city ^q which is called by my name, and

m Chap. 51. 41. — *n* Hab. 2. 16. — *o* Isa. 51. 21; 63. 6. — *p* Prov. 11. 31; chap. 49. 12; Ezek. 9. 6; Obad. 16; Luke 23. 31; 1 Peter 4. 17. — *5* Heb. upon which my name is called. — *q* Dan. 9. 18, 19.

dim, (Chaldea,) which also seems to be the sense intended. Jerome, in the fourth century, gives this explanation, which he had probably derived from his rabbinical teachers. If this explanation is correct, it is doubtless true, as Dean Smith says, that this is the "oldest known cipher."

But even if this view be taken, it will still be questioned whether this device was originated by Jeremiah for some purpose of his own, or whether he simply appropriated what was formed to his hand. For the former no good reason can be given, as there was evidently no concealment by means of this name. Besides, there is some sense of incongruity between the character and work of a prophet feeling almost insupportably the burden of the Lord's message of judgment, and such an artificial, not to say puerile, expedient as this. But if these words were already in common use there is no reason why Jeremiah may not have employed them, especially if the baldness of his reference to Babylon might thus be in any measure relieved. And yet it is more than possible that the origin of these words is altogether of a different character. For instance, as Professor Rawlinson suggests, this name Sheshach may belong to a Babylonian divinity, and for that reason be taken for the land.

27. Drink ye, etc.—Language which sets forth vividly and impressively the helplessness of the people under the divine inflictions.

should ye be utterly unpunished? Ye shall not be unpunished: for ¹I will call for a sword upon all the inhabitants of the earth, saith the LORD of hosts.

30 Therefore prophesy thou against them all these words, and say unto them, The LORD shall ^aroar from on high, and utter his voice from ¹his holy habitation; he shall mightily roar upon ^ahis habitation; he shall give ^aa shout, as they that tread *the grapes*, against all the inhabitants of the earth. **31** A noise shall come *even* to the ends of the earth; for the LORD hath ^aa controversy with the nations: ^ahe will plead with all flesh; he will give them *that are* wicked to the sword, saith the LORD.

32 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, Behold, evil shall go forth from nation to nation, and ^aa great whirlwind shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth. **33** ^aAnd the slain of the LORD shall be at that day from *one* end of the earth even unto the *other* end of the earth:

^r Ezek. 38. 21. — ^s Isa. 42. 13; Joel 3. 16; Amos 1. 2. — ^t Psa. 11. 4; chap. 17. 12. — ^u 1 Kings 9. 3; Psa. 132. 14. — ^v Isa. 16. 9; chap. 48. 33. — ^w Hosea 4. 1; Micah 6. 2. — ^x Isa. 66. 16; Joel 3. 2. — ^y Chap. 23. 19; 30. 23. — ^z Isa. 66. 16. — ^a Chap. 16. 4, 6.

THE JUDGMENT ON THE WORLD, 30-38.

30. The Lord shall roar—As a lion furious for his prey, (see Joel iii, 16, Amos i, 2,) before whom sheep and shepherds (verses 34-36) fall helplessly on the ground in consternation and despair. **They that tread the grapes**—Who raise the vintage-shout, keeping time, as was the custom, by the alternate raising and pushing down of the feet.

31. A noise—The din of war, the noise of great armies; hence full of terror and danger.

32. Evil shall go forth—As a fierce and destructive storm travels on from nation to nation.

34. Howl, ye shepherds—Thrown into consternation by both the lion and the storm. **Wallow yourselves**—Roll yourselves.

37. The peaceable habitations—Literally, the *pastures of peace*, where the flocks feed and lie down without fear or disturbance.

38. Forsaken his covert—Here the prophet returns to his original figure of a fierce and terrible lion stalking forth for his prey.

they shall not be ^alamented, ^bneither gathered, nor buried; they shall be dung upon the ground.

34 ^cHowl, ye shepherds, and cry; and wallow yourselves *in the ashes*, ye principal of the flock: for ^ethe days of your slaughter and of your dispersions are accomplished; and ye shall fall like ^aa pleasant vessel. **35** And ^athe shepherds shall have no way to flee, nor the principal of the flock to escape. **36** A voice of the cry of the shepherds, and a howling of the principal of the flock, *shall be heard*: for the LORD hath spoiled their pasture. **37** And the peaceable habitations are cut down because of the fierce anger of the LORD. **38** He hath forsaken ^ahis covert, as the lion: for their land is ^adesolate because of the fierceness of the oppressor, and because of his fierce anger.

CHAPTER XXVI.

IN the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of

^b Psa. 79. 3; chap. 8. 2; Rev. 11. 9. — ^c Chap. 4. 8; 6. 26. — ^d Heb. *your days for slaughter*. — ^e Heb. *a vessel of desire*. — ^f Heb. *flight shall perish from the shepherds, and escaping from, etc.*, Amos 2. 14. — ^g Psa. 76. 2. — ^h Heb. *a desolation*.

CHAPTER XXVI.

DESTRUCTION THREATENED, 1-7.

This chapter adds some historical details to the prophecies which are given more at length in chapters vii-ix. It more definitely marks the time, gives the language, and narrates the circumstances. It is distinguished by a special heading which separates it from the prophecies preceding and following. But in subject-matter it is closely joined to what follows, and has the same note of time as the next chapter. Chapters xxvii-xxix are closely related to chapter xxv, being a fuller treatment of the subject of the captivity, and especially a counter assertion to Haniah's false prophecy, which promised a speedy release and return to their own land. Between these comes chapter xxvi as an interesting historical interlude, bringing out the position of Jeremiah and his relations to the people, and also their temper at this time, immediately preceding their downfall.

1. In the beginning, etc.—This phrase clearly indicates a time before

O. T.

Judah came this word from the LORD, saying, **2** Thus saith the LORD; Stand in ^athe court of the LORD's house, and speak unto all the cities of Judah, which come to worship in the LORD's house, ^ball the words that I command thee to speak unto them; ^cdiminish not a word. **3** ^dIf so be they will hearken, and turn every man from his evil way, that I may ^erepent me of the evil, which I purpose to do unto them because of the evil of their doings. **4** And thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the LORD; ^f'If ye will not hearken to me, to walk in my law, which I have set before you, **5** To hearken to the words of my servants the prophets, ^gwhom I sent unto you, both rising up early, and sending ^hthem, but ye have not hearkened; **6** Then will I make this house like ⁱShiloh, and will make this city ^ja curse to all the nations of the earth. **7** So the priests and the prophets and all the people heard Jeremiah speaking these words in the house of the LORD.

^a Chap. 19. 14. — ^b Ezek. 3. 10; Matt. 28. 20. — ^c Acts 20. 27. — ^d Chap. 36. 3. — ^e Chap. 18. 8; Jonah 3. 8, 9. — ^f Lev. 26. 14, etc.; Deut. 28. 15. — ^g Chap. 7. 13, 25; 11. 7; 25. 3, 4.

the memorable fourth year of this king, in which took place the first deportation to Babylon.

2. Court of the Lord's house—Probably the people's court. How bold and how solemnly impressive must the prophecy of destruction have sounded in this place!

3. If so be they will hearken—Thus, even at the very last, comes the intimation that repentance would avert their ruin. And so their destruction, like that of all sinners, was self-procured. The worst evils cannot be thrust upon us from without. The irretrievable ruin is that which comes from within, and results from persistent and obdurate wickedness.

6. Shiloh—Where God once dwelt. Compare vii, 14. Once the sanctuary of the people, even as Jerusalem, but now a desolation.

7. The priests and the prophets—Indicating, in no doubtful manner, how effectually Jeremiah had succeeded in arresting public attention.

INDIGNATION OF THE PEOPLE, 8-19.

8. Had made an end of speaking, etc.—To this point Jeremiah had com-

8 Now it came to pass, when Jeremiah had made an end of speaking all that the LORD had commanded him to speak unto all the people, that the priests and the prophets and all the people took him, saying, Thou shalt surely die.

9 Why hast thou prophesied in the name of the LORD, saying, This house shall be like Shiloh, and this city shall be desolate without an inhabitant? And all the people were gathered against Jeremiah in the house of the LORD.

10 When the princes of Judah heard these things, then they came up from the king's house unto the house of the LORD, and sat down ¹in the entry of the new gate of the LORD's house. **11** Then spake the priests and the prophets unto the princes and to all the people, saying, ²This man ³is worthy to die; ⁴for he hath prophesied against this city, as ye have heard with your ears.

12 Then spake Jeremiah unto all the princes and to all the people, saying, The LORD sent me to prophesy against

^h 1 Sam. 4. 10, 11; Psal. 78. 60; chap. 7. 12, 14. — ⁱ Isa. 65. 15; chap. 24. 9. — ^j Or, *at the door*. — ² Heb. *The judgment of death is for this man*. — ^k Chap. 38. 4.

manded the respectful attention of the people. Great as was their indignation they did not interrupt his discourse. Of course, the phrase **all the people** must not be pressed to the extreme. It implies, not absolute unanimity, but general agreement.

9. Why hast thou prophesied—The charge was false prophesying, for which the penalty would be death. Deut. xviii, 20. **Against Jeremiah**—Rather, *unto Jeremiah*. They came about him for trial.

10. Princes of Judah—Probably the judicial officers who were about the palace—the germ of the sanhedrin of later times. They evidently had the power of life and death. **The new gate**—Cannot be identified. The Targum says, “east gate.” It was built by Jotham, (2 Kings xv, 35,) and, according to chapter xxxvi, 10, was by the inner court.

12. The Lord sent me—How simple and how perfect this justification! The prophets, men of his own class, join with the priests in calling for Jeremiah's condemnation; a circumstance which must have had great weight with the people. Yet his answer is

this house and against this city all the words that ye have heard. **13** Therefore now ¹amend your ways and your doings, and obey the voice of the Lord your God; and the Lord will ^mrepent him of the evil that he hath pronounced against you. **14** As for me, behold, ⁿI am in your hand: do with me ^sas seemeth good and meet unto you. **15** But know ye for certain, that if ye put me to death, ye shall surely bring innocent blood upon yourselves, and upon this city, and upon the inhabitants thereof: for of a truth the Lord hath sent me unto you to speak all these words in your ears.

¹ Chapter 7. 3. — ^m Verses 3, 19. — ⁿ Chapter 38. 5. — ^s Hebrew, *as it is good and right*

sufficient. It exculpates him, and virtually condemns them; for they, so far from giving free course to the word of God, actually hindered it.

13-15. Amend your ways—Even now he has for them a message of love and hope. He speaks as a man eager for one thing—the good of the commonwealth. **I am in your hands**—His individual life was but a trifle, and they could do with him according to their pleasure. His only protest is against being esteemed a false prophet, for to reject him would be to reject his message.

16. The princes and all the people—The action of these magistrates was worthy of better times. Jeremiah's simple and heroic words are rightly seen to indicate the true prophet; and so they refuse the popular clamour for his blood. This decision commands the approval of the people, showing that not all had a positive temper against him; but, on the contrary, many were open to feel the force and truthfulness of his words. This trial, in many particulars, answers to that other trial in which the great archetypal Prophet stood before the world's tribunal, as represented by Pilate, and, by the resistless force of his own divine purity, compelled the verdict, "I find no fault in the man."

17. Elders—These represented the assembled congregation, giving voice to the sentiment of the people. The scene was an impressive one. The

16 Then said the princes and all the people unto the priests and to the prophets; This man is not worthy to die: for he hath spoken to us in the name of the Lord our God. **17** ^oThen rose up certain of the elders of the land, and spake to all the assembly of the people, saying, **18** ^pMicah the Morasthite prophesied in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah, and spake to all the people of Judah, saying, Thus saith the Lord of hosts; ^qZion shall be ploughed like a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of a forest. **19** Did Hezekiah king of Judah and all Judah put

in your eyes. — ^o See Acts 5. 34, etc. — ^p Micah 1. 1. — ^q Micah 3. 12.

bold, solitary, suffering prophet, standing almost in the visible shadow of death; the sanctimonious, spiteful, scoffing priests and prophets; the vast congregation of people whose earthly and spiritual hopes were involved in the questions at issue; the grave and reverend judges, visible embodiment of the dread majesty of the law; the place of meeting, being none other than the sanctuary itself, endeared by the holy memories of four centuries; and the clouds of war gathering in the distant horizon—all conspire to the deep and solemn interest of the occasion, and make it one of the notable passages of history.

18. Micah the Morasthite—See Micah iii, 12. The name stands in the original in its full form, *Micajah—who is like God?* He is called the "Morasthite" from the place of his residence, Morastheth. The pertinence of the reference consists in this, that predictions of evil against the holy place are not without distinguished precedent, and even good Hezekiah was not above taking warning from them.

19. Did Hezekiah, etc.—What is here stated we learn from no other source. We are elsewhere told of Micah's prophecy, and of Hezekiah's prayer to God for protection from the mighty enemy, but not of the result here stated. Here, then, as in many other places, do we recognise a coming in of material from a source outside of the canonical Scriptures. **Besought**

him at all to death? did he not fear the LORD, and besought the LORD, and the LORD repented him of the evil which he had pronounced against them? Thus might we procure great evil against our souls. **20** And there was also a man that prophesied in the name of the LORD, Urijah the son of Shemiah of Kirjath-jearim, who prophesied against this city and against this land according to all the words of Jeremiah: **21** And when Jehoiakim the king, with all his mighty men, and all the princes, heard his words, the king sought to put him to death: but when Urijah heard it, he was afraid, and fled, and went into Egypt; **22** And Jehoiakim the king

^r 2 Chron. 32. 26.—⁴ Heb. *the face of the LORD*.—^s Exod. 32. 14; 2 Sam. 24. 16.—^t Acts 5. 39.

The Lord—Literally, *stroke the face of Jehovah*.

THE FATE OF URIJAH THE PROPHET, 20–24.

20. The case of the prophet Urijah is here cited, but whether by the elders, in continuation of their speech, or by Jeremiah himself, as the historian, has been disputed. Its close connexion with the preceding and its general agreement as to subject-matter, favours the former view; but the essential incongruity of the two histories as to their apparent bearing on the case of Jeremiah, and the difficulty, if not impossibility, of finding time for this history of Urijah in the reign of Jehoiakim before this time, which, as stated in verse 1, was “in the beginning” of his reign, seem wellnigh conclusive in favour of the latter. It would seem, then, that Jeremiah added this incident in order to perfect the contrast between Hezekiah and Jehoiakim, and thus still more perfectly illustrate the difficulties and dangers by which he was environed. The phrase **according to all the words of Jeremiah** falls in and confirms this view.

As to the history itself, this passage is alone. We have no other information about this man Urijah than is given here. But the passage shows that Jeremiah did not stand absolutely alone in his work, but that other men sympathized with, supported, and, as in this instance, actually assisted. So

sent men into Egypt, *namely*, Elnathan the son of Achbor, and *certain* men with him into Egypt. **23** And they fetched forth Urijah out of Egypt, and brought him unto Jehoiakim the king; who slew him with the sword, and cast his dead body into the graves of the ⁶ common people. **24** Nevertheless, “the hand of Ahikam the son of Shaphan was with Jeremiah, that they should not give him into the hand of the people to put him to death.

CHAPTER XXVII.

IN the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah ^a king of Judah came this word unto Jeremiah

⁵ Heb. *sons of the people*.—^u 2 Kings 22. 12, 14; chap. 39. 14.—^a See verses 3, 12, 20; chap. 28. 1.

true is it that that extreme sense of loneliness sometimes exhibited by such men as Jeremiah and Elijah is not warranted.

22. Sent men into Egypt—Jehoiakim was in close alliance with the king of Egypt, having been placed on his throne by him; hence the facility with which he seemed to recover a man who sought asylum there. **Elnathan**—Whether this was the king's father-in-law, who also had the same name, (2 Kings xxiv, 8,) cannot be decided. But he is mentioned in chapter xxxvi, 12, 25, as among the princes favourable to Jeremiah, which bears against such identification.

23. Common people—See 2 Kings xxiii, 6. The place of this “common” burial ground was in the Kidron valley.

24. Hand of Ahikam—The implication of this verse would seem to be, that had not Jeremiah been especially protected by a man of influence and power he would have shared a similar fate with Urijah.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE SUBJUGATION OF NEIGHBOURING KINGS, 1–11.

1. Jehoiakim—A single Codex and the Syriac and Arabic Versions have Zedekiah, and this is manifestly correct. (Compare verses 3, 12, and chapter xxviii, 1.) Probably a mistake in transcription arose from confounding this caption with that of the preceding chapter.

from the LORD, saying, **2** Thus saith the LORD to me; Make thee bonds and yokes, ^b and put them upon thy neck, **3** And send them to the king of Edom, and to the king of Moab, and to the king of the Ammonites, and to the king of Tyrus, and to the king of Zidon, by the hand of the messengers which come to Jerusalem unto Zedekiah king of Judah; **4** And command them ^c to say unto their masters, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Thus shall ye say unto your masters; **5** ^c I have made the earth, the man and the beast that are upon the ground, by my great power and by my outstretched arm, and ^d have given it unto whom it seemed meet unto me. ^e And now have I given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant; and ^f the beasts of the

field have I given him also to serve him. **7** ^g And all nations shall serve him, and his son, and his son's son, ^h until the very time of his land come: ⁱ and then many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of him. **8** And it shall come to pass, ^j that the nation and kingdom which will not serve the same Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, and that will not put their neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, that nation will I punish, saith the LORD, with the sword, and with the famine, and with the pestilence, until I have consumed them by his hand. **9** Therefore hearken not ye to your prophets, nor to your diviners, nor to your ^k dreamers, nor to your enchanters, nor to your sorcerers, which speak unto you, saying, Ye shall not serve the king of Babylon: **10** ^l For they prophesy ^m lie unto you,

¹ Or, *hath the LORD said.* — *b* Chap. 28. 10, 12; so Ezek. 4. 1; 12. 3; 24. 3, etc. — ² Or, *concerning their masters, saying.* — *c* Psa. 115. 15; 146. 6; Isa. 45. 12. — *d* Psa. 115. 16; Dan. 4. 17, 25, 32.

e Chap. 28. 14. — *f* Chap. 25. 9; 43. 10; Ezek. 29. 18, 20. — *g* Chap. 28. 14; Dan. 2. 38. — *h* 2 Chron. 36. 20. — *i* Chap. 25. 12; 50. 27; Dan. 5. 26. — *k* Chap. 25. 14. — ³ Heb. *dreams.* — *l* Verse 14.

2. Bonds and yokes—The yoke was made of two curved pieces of wood, placed the one over and the other under the neck of the animal, and fastened together with cords. See Psa. ii, 3. **Put them upon thy neck**—In the manner in which they were worn by animals when used to draw a load. The “yoke,” as here employed, was the appropriate symbol of bondage. This command was literally obeyed. See chap. xxviii, 10. Some hold that Jeremiah obeyed these literally as to himself, but not for the different kings mentioned. But this does great violence to the text, which is as explicit for one as the other.

3. Which come to Jerusalem—Probably for the purpose of forming a coalition against the Chaldean power. Hence the position of Jeremiah was a peculiarly trying one, in that he had to stand against this widespread and popular sentiment.

4. Command them to say unto their masters, etc.—Here is a specimen of a missionary message of the olden time. God causes his prophet to deliver a message in which his universal creatorship, his unity, and his supremacy are most plainly asserted. He brings to view his universal providence, extending not only to his own

chosen people but to all the nations. He intimates that even Nebuchadnezzar, the eminent representative heathen king, rules by the appointment of God, and that his own divine resources would be brought to bear to perpetuate his authority. And yet he does not close without the intimation that Babylon, in its turn, shall become subject.

7. The very time of his land—The time when it, too, shall be given to the spoiler. **Shall serve themselves of him**—That is, shall make him to serve them. **Son, and his son's son**—The actual facts do not certainly accord with this form of expression. Nebuchadnezzar was succeeded by his son, and then by his son-in-law, and he by his own son in turn. But the phrase here used is proverbial in form, (see Deut. vi, 2,) and only implies the long duration of Nebuchadnezzar's dynasty.

9. Prophets...diviners...dreamers...enchanters...sorcerers—Five kinds of heathen prophecy are here mentioned, and five kings have also been introduced. (See verse 5.) But this correspondence is, without doubt, purely accidental. The only significance to be attached to the fact that so many terms are here employed is, that they suggest and illustrate the variety

to remove you far from your land; and that I should drive you out, and ye should perish. **11** But the nations that bring their neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serve him, those will I let remain still in their own land, saith the Lord; and they shall till it, and dwell therein.

12 I spake also to ^m Zedekiah king of Judah according to all these words, saying, Bring your necks under the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serve him and his people, and live. **13** ^a Why will ye die, thou and thy people, by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence, as the Lord hath spoken against the nation that will not serve the king of Babylon? **14** Therefore hearken not unto the words of the prophets that speak unto you, saying, Ye shall not serve the king of Babylon: for they prophesy ^a a lie unto you. **15** For I have not sent them, saith the Lord, yet they prophesy ^a a lie in my name; that I might drive

^m Chapter 28. 1; 38. 17. — ⁿ Ezekiel 18. 31. — ^o Chap. 14. 14; 23. 21; 29. 8, 9. — ^a Hebrew, *in a lie*, or, *lyingly*.

of delusive schemes for supplying to the people the lack of inspiration. Error is many; truth is one.

10. To remove you—This, though not the purpose, would be the result of their counsels: thus bringing about the very consequence they proposed to avert.

11. The nations—Literally, the nation.

PREDICTION OF THE SUBJUGATION OF KING ZEDEKIAH, 12-15.

12. To Zedekiah...bring your necks—The plural form shows that Zedekiah is addressed in his representative capacity, and that the people are included.

13. Why will ye die—Namely, by persisting in that course which, as you have been plainly warned, will lead to inevitable destruction. They cannot successfully resist Nebuchadnezzar, for he is armed with Jehovah's authority. (Verses 6-8.)

15. In my name—Thus making God's name "a plea for lies."

MESSAGE TO THE PRIESTS AND PEOPLE, 16-22.

16. Vessels of the Lord's house—Made by Solomon (1 Kings vii, 48-50)

you out, and that ye might perish, ye, and the prophets that prophesy unto you. **16** Also I spake to the priests and to all this people, saying, Thus saith the Lord; Hearken not to the words of your prophets that prophesy unto you, saying, Behold, ^p the vessels of the Lord's house shall now shortly be brought again from Babylon: for they prophesy a lie unto you. **17** Hearken not unto them; serve the king of Babylon, and live: wherefore should this city be laid waste? **18** But if they *be* prophets, and if the word of the Lord be with them, let them now make intercession to the Lord of hosts, that the vessels which are left in the house of the Lord, and *in* the house of the king of Judah, and at Jerusalem, go not to Babylon.

19 For thus saith the Lord of hosts ^q concerning the pillars, and concerning the sea, and concerning the bases, and concerning the residue of the vessels

^p 2 Chronicles 36. 7, 10; chapter 28. 3; Daniel 1. 2. — ^q 2 Kings 25. 13, etc.; chapter 52. 17, 20, 21.

and carried to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar. 2 Kings xxiv, 13. They were valuable, not only because of their intrinsic worth, being made of gold, but especially because of their representative character, being devoted to religious uses, so that for them to fall into the possession of a heathen power, and be carried away to a heathen land, was as when the ark of God was captured by the Philistines. **Now shortly**—Speedily. **From Babylon**—Literally, *from Babylon-ward*.

17. Serve the king of Babylon—The extreme severity of this message to Jeremiah, who was charged with its delivery, was its seemingly unpatriotic character. He counselled submission to the enemy. But it was in reality the highest and purest patriotism, and he who delivered it was not only a patriot, but a hero.

18. Vessels...left—Only the more costly vessels, and those most readily accessible, were at first removed. Those remaining were not only in the temple, but sacred utensils were probably kept in other places also.

19. The pillars—Jachin and Boaz. 1 Kings vii, 21. **The sea**—That is, the brazen sea. 1 Kings vii, 23. **The bases**—The frames or pedestals which

that remain in this city, **20** Which Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon took not, when he carried away ^a captive Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah from Jerusalem to Babylon, and all the nobles of Judah and Jerusalem: **21** Yea, thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, concerning the vessels that remain *in* the house of the Lord, and *in* the house of the king of Judah and of Jerusalem; **22** They shall be ^a carried to Babylon, and there shall they be until the day that I ¹ visit them, saith the Lord; then ^a will I bring them up, and restore them to this place.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

AND ^a it came to pass the same year, in the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah king of Judah, in the fourth year, and in the fifth month, that Hananiah the son of Azur the prophet, which was of Gibeon, spake unto me in the

^a 2 Kings 24. 14, 15; chap. 24. 1. — ^s 2 Kings 25. 13; 2 Chron. 36. 18. — ^t 2 Chron. 36. 21; chap. 29. 10; 32. 5. — ^u Ezra 1. 7; 7. 14.

supported the basins for washing the sacrificial flesh. 1 Kings vii, 27.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

HANANIAH'S FALSE PROPHECY, 1-4.

1. Beginning...fourth year—From this it appears that the term "beginning" was extended so as to include the "fourth." There is no necessity for regarding this an error in the text, as does Dean Smith. If, as would seem to be the case, Zedekiah did not become fully established in his kingdom, until his fourth year, such an extension of the term "beginning" would be most natural. **Hananiah**—Not otherwise known; but as he belonged to Gibeon, which was a city of the priests, it has been conjectured that he, like Jeremiah, belonged to a priestly family. Hence, there may be special significance in the statement that he confronted Jeremiah **in the presence of the priests.**

2. I have broken—A prophetic perfect. A thing determined on by God is as good as done.

3. Two...years—Certainly a very agreeable contrast to Jeremiah's seventy years. The expression used is unusually definite. Literally, *two years in days*, as though it were not a gener-

house of the Lord, in the presence of the priests and of all the people, saying, **2** Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, saying, I have broken ^b the yoke of the king of Babylon. **3** ^a Within ¹ two full years will I bring again into this place all the vessels of the Lord's house, that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon took away from this place, and carried them to Babylon; **4** And I will bring again to this place Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah, with all the ² captives of Judah, that went into Babylon, saith the Lord: for I will break the yoke of the king of Babylon.

5 Then the prophet Jeremiah said unto the prophet Hananiah in the presence of the priests, and in the presence of all the people that stood in the house of the Lord, **■** Even the prophet Jeremiah said, ^a Amen: the Lord do so: the Lord perform thy words which thou hast prophesied, to bring again the

^a Chap. 27. 1. — ^b Chap. 27. 12. — ^c Chap. 27. 16. — ¹ Heb. *two years of days*. — ² Heb. *captivity*. — ^d 1 Kings 1. 36.

al period, but one of mathematical exactness. In this exactitude, as well as in the opening formula, Hananiah seeks to give his deliverance the impress of a God-inspired prophecy.

4. The mention of **Jeconiah** suggests the probability that there were many to whom his return would be specially grateful—that there was an influential party identified with the exiled king.

JEREMIAH'S MILD AND PEACEABLE ANSWER, 5-11.

5, 6. Jeremiah said—The answer of Jeremiah does high honour to his judgment and his heart. He speaks with meekness and moderation, and yet without abating in the smallest measure the rigour of his appeal to God and his immutable law. **Amen**, etc.—This clause expresses the sympathy of the prophet. Could all this be true, who, as Jeremiah, would rejoice? He preferred the welfare of his country to his own honour. As Moses prayed to be "blotted out of the book" of God, or as Paul could wish himself "accursed from Christ" for the sake of Israel, so Jeremiah would joyfully offer up himself on the altar of his people and country.

vessels of the LORD's house, and all that is carried away captive, from Babylon into this place. **7** Nevertheless, hear thou now this word that I speak in thine ears, and in the ears of all the people; **8** The prophets that have been before me and before thee of old prophesied both against many countries, and against great kingdoms, of war, and of evil, and of pestilence. ■ **9** The prophet which prophesieth of peace, when the word of the prophet shall come to pass, then shall the prophet be known, that the LORD hath truly sent him.

10 Then Hananiah the prophet took the yoke from off the prophet Jeremiah's neck, and brake it. **11** And Hananiah spake in the presence of all the people, saying, Thus saith the LORD; Even so will I break the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon from the neck of all nations within the space of two full years. And the prophet Jeremiah went his way.

12 Then the word of the LORD came

e Deut. 18. 22.—*f* Chap. 27. 2.—*g* Chap. 27. 7.—*h* Deut. 28. 48; chap. 27. 7.—*i* Chap. 27. 6.

8. The prophets that have been before me—Mentioned as the very best warrant for untoward predictions. With them it was not disloyalty, either to God or their country, to predict evil.

9. Shall come to pass—The event is a test, though not the only test, of prophecy. This it is which is here appealed to, and Jeremiah shows at once his faith and his moderation by proposing to abide the test.

10. Took the yoke... and brake it—Thus showing an unwillingness to wait for the event. Hananiah seeks to make a still more vivid and emphatic expression of his prediction by breaking in pieces Jeremiah's yoke in the presence of the multitude—an act that doubtless gave great delight to the people. **Jeremiah went his way**—In the popular disfavour, but strong and peaceful in the faith of God.

13. Yokes of wood—Representing the comparatively easy burden of dependency and tribute which the king of Babylon at first imposed. **Yokes of iron**—Emblems of the bitter bondage of the near future, when their city and temple should be destroyed, and the body of the people carried into

unto Jeremiah *the prophet*, after that Hananiah the prophet had broken the yoke from off the neck of the prophet Jeremiah, saying, **13** Go and tell Hananiah, saying, Thus saith the LORD; Thou hast broken the yokes of wood; but thou shalt make for them yokes of iron. **14** For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; ^h I have put a yoke of iron upon the neck of all these nations, that they may serve Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon; and they shall serve him: and ⁱ I have given him the beasts of the field also.

15 Then said the prophet Jeremiah unto Hananiah the prophet, Hear now, Hananiah; The LORD hath not sent thee; but ^k thou makest this people to trust in a lie. **16** Therefore thus saith the LORD; Behold, I will cast thee from off the face of the earth: this year thou shalt die, because thou hast taught ^l rebellion against the LORD. **17** So Hananiah the prophet died the same year in the seventh month.

k Chap. 29. 31; Ezek. 13. 22.—*l* Deut. 13. 5; chap. 29. 32.—³ Heb. *revolt*.

captivity. "It is better to take up a light cross in our way, than to pull a heavier one over our heads. We may escape destroying providences by submitting to humbling providences."

16, 17. This year thou shalt die—A fearful pledge and earnest of the fulfilment of Jeremiah's prophecies. Two months later, namely, **in the seventh month**, these words of prophetic judgment on one who claimed to speak in the name of Jehovah were fulfilled.

CHAPTER XXIX.

LETTER TO THE EXILES, 1-23.

To complete the history of this conflict between Jeremiah and those like Hananiah, who promised to the Jews the speedy downfall of Nebuchadnezzar's power and the consequent restoration of those who had gone into captivity, there is given in this chapter the letter which Jeremiah wrote to those in Babylon to correct the false hopes which had sprung up there. As was to be expected, there was the same uneasiness at Babylon as at Jerusalem. The eager desire of these captives that the assurances of speedy release should come true, joined with

CHAPTER XXIX.

NOW these are the words of the letter that Jeremiah the prophet sent from Jerusalem unto the residue of the elders which were carried away captives, and to the priests, and to the prophets, and to all the people whom Nebuchadnezzar had carried away captive from Jerusalem to Babylon; **2** (After that Jeconiah the king, and the queen, and the eunuchs, the princes of Judah and Jerusalem, and the carpenters, and the smiths, were departed from Jerusalem;) **3** By the hand of Elasah the son of Shaphan, and Gemariah the son of Hilkiyah, (whom Zedekiah king of Judah sent unto Babylon to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon,) saying, **4** Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, unto all that are carried away captives, whom I have caused to be carried away from Jerusalem unto Babylon; **5** ^b Build ye houses, and dwell in them; and plant gardens, and eat the fruit of them; **6** Take ye wives, and beget sons and daughters; and take wives for your sons, and give your daughters to husbands, that they may bear sons and daughters; that ye may be increased

a 2 Kings 24. 12, etc; chap. 22. 26; 28. 4.

1 Or, chamberlains.—b Verse 28.

an original impatience of foreign rule, doubtless created a dangerous tendency toward revolt. To correct this, to enlarge their view of God's plans, and to lead them into his purposes more fully, this letter was written.

1. The words of the letter—The Substance or import of the letter. The exact form of words does not seem to be given. **Residue of the elders**—Those still surviving of the original company carried away. The time had not, indeed, been long, but it had doubtless been, for these people thus violently torn away from their homes and all ordinary conditions of safety and comfort, a time of unusual mortality. And they had not yet become so well organized in the land of their exile as that the places of these elders were promptly filled at their death.

2, 3. The queen—Rather, *the queen-mother*, Nehushta, daughter of El-nathan. See chap. xiii, 18, and 2 Kings chap. xxiv, 8, 15. **The eunuchs, the princes**—The absence of the conjunction between these nouns would seem to imply that they are in apposition. If so, instead of "eunuchs" we ought to read *officers*, a sense which, according to Fürst, but not to Gesenius, the original word has in several places: *e. g.*, Jer. xx, 7; xli, 16; 2 Kings xxiv, 12; xxv, 19. But it is possible that Keil's conception of this sentence is correct, in that he finds here enumerated three general classes: 1) The court class, namely, the king, queen, and eunuchs. 2) The official class—the princes of Judah and Jerusalem. 3) The artisan class—carpenters and

smiths; and, hence, the copula is omitted, marking the transition from the first to the second. **Elasah the son of Shaphan**—In chap. xxvi, 24, Ahikam is so called, indicating that they were brothers. One of Ahikam's sons was made governor by the Chaldeans. Chap. xxxix, 14. It would hence appear that this was an influential family, and one sympathizing with Jeremiah. Of **Gemariah** we know nothing outside of this passage. But we must not confound him with that Gemariah, "son of Shaphan," out of the window of whose room Jeremiah read Jehoiakim's roll. Chapter xxxix, 14. **Whom Zedekiah... sent**—Zedekiah himself went to Babylon in the fourth year of his reign. That he should also, on this occasion, have sent a formal embassy but illustrates how completely dependent he felt himself on the king of Babylon. As to the time of this embassy we have no knowledge.

4. Whom I have caused to be carried away—Thus laying the firm foundation for their faith and contentment with their providential allotment. In any place where God sends his people they ought to be content.

5. Build ye houses—A command which stands in bold antagonism to the prophecy of Hananiah the prophet. A majority of them would live and die in that land; hence, the more stable their life there the better for them. The command to **take wives** involves the same assumption—that, at least for the present generation, this land of exile is their home.

there, and not diminished. **7** And seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away captives, and pray unto the LORD for it: for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace.

8 For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Let not your prophets and your diviners, that be in the midst of you, deceive you, neither hearken to your dreams which ye cause to be dreamed. ■ For they prophesy false-ly unto you in my name: I have not sent them, saith the LORD.

10 For thus saith the LORD, That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place. **11** For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. **12** Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray

unto me, and I will hearken unto you. **13** And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. **14** And I will be found of you, saith the LORD; and I will turn away your captivity, and I will gather you from all the nations, and from all the places whither I have driven you, saith the LORD; and I will bring you again into the place whence I caused you to be carried away captive.

15 Because ye have said, The LORD hath raised us up prophets in Babylon; **16** Know that thus saith the LORD of the king that sitteth upon the throne of David, and of all the people that dwell-eth in this city, and of your brethren that are not gone forth with you into captivity; **17** Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Behold, I will send upon them the sword, the famine, and the pestilence, and will make them like vile figs, that cannot be eaten, they are so evil. **18** And I will persecute them

c Ezra 6. 10; 1 Tim. 2. 2. — d Chap. 14. 14; 23. 21; 27. 14, 15; Eph. 5. 6. — e Verse 31. — 2 Heb. *in a lie*. — f 2 Chron. 36. 31; 2: Ezra 1. 1; chap. 25. 12; 27. 22; Dan. 9. 2. — 3 Heb. *end and expectation*.

g Daniel 9. 3, etc. — h Lev. 26. 39, 40, etc.; Deut. 30. 1, etc. — i Chapter 24. 7. — k Deut. 4. 7; Psalm 32. 6; 46. 1; Isaiah 55. 8. — l Chapter 23. 8, 9; 30. 3; 32. 37. — m Chapter 24. 10. — n Chapter 24. 8.

7. In the peace thereof shall ye have peace—A truth so fundamental as to be wellnigh universal. The life of the individual is laid in that of the community. Only in extremely exceptional cases can he be prosperous while "the city" is in ferment and wretchedness.

8. Your diviners, that be in the midst of you—Even in Babylon false prophets were stimulating the delusive hope of a speedy restoration. **Which ye cause to be dreamed**—The translation here has been objected to, but is to be approved. It expresses the people's morbid appetite for these prophecies. So, in later times, have the "itching ears" of the people often originated a low and unworthy type of religious teaching.

10. Seventy years—See xxv, 11.

11. An expected end—Literally, *a destiny (a future) and a hope*; that is, a desirable future.

12. Go and pray—The simple and obvious meaning is the true one. Go to the place of prayer, suggesting an organized religious life. Devout souls will be sure to find places of holy con-vocation. See Deut. iv, 29, 30; xxx, 1-5.

15. Ye have said—The connexion here is evident, though some have denied that there is any, and have decided this verse to be an interpolation. The fact that there was still a king sitting on the throne of David was doubtless urged as a proof that the reverses which had come to the kingdom were merely temporary. They themselves were unfortunately prisoners and exiles, but the throne of David and the services of the temple were visible sacraments of God's favour and presence with his people. Hence, in the land of their exile their prophets were busy in flattering their hopes of a speedy deliverance. And so, in this passage, the prophet takes the very ground from beneath their feet by predicting the complete overthrow of the government at Jerusalem.

16. King . . . all the people . . . your brethren—The third noun is in apposition with the first and second, and hence the *and* of the translators is misleading. Omit it.

17. Vile figs—See chap. xxiv, 2, etc. The adjective is very expressive in the original — *shuddering* — such figs as make one shudder to taste them.

with the sword, with the famine, and with the pestilence, and ° will deliver them to be removed to all the kingdoms of the earth, † to be ‡ a curse, and an astonishment, and a hissing, and a reproach, among all the nations whither I have driven them: **19** Because they have not hearkened to my words, saith the LORD, which † I sent unto them by my servants the prophets, rising up early and sending them; but ye would not hear, saith the LORD.

20 Hear ye therefore the word of the LORD, all ye of the captivity, whom I have sent from Jerusalem to Babylon: **21** Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, of Ahab the son of Kolaiah, and of Zedekiah the son of Maa-seiah, which prophecy a lie unto you in my name; Behold, I will deliver them into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon; and he shall slay them before your eyes; **22** † And of them shall be taken up a curse by all the captivity

of Judah which are in Babylon, saying, The LORD make thee like Zedekiah and like Ahab, † whom the king of Babylon roasted in the fire; **23** Because † they have committed villany in Israel, and have committed adultery with their neighbours' wives, and have spoken lying words in my name, which I have not commanded them; even I know, and am a witness, saith the LORD.

24 Thus shalt thou also speak to Shemaiah the † Nehelamite, saying, **25** Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, saying, Because thou hast sent letters in thy name unto all the people that are at Jerusalem, † and to Zephaniah the son of Mauseiah the priest, and to all the priests, saying, **26** The LORD hath made thee priest in the stead of Jehoiada the priest, that ye should be † officers in the house of the LORD, for every man that is † mad, and maketh himself a prophet, that thou shouldst † put him in prison, and in the

o Deut. 28, 25; 2 Chron. 29, 8; chap. 15, 4; 24, 9; 34, 17. — † Heb. for a curse. — ‡ Chap. 25, 6; 43, 18. — § Chap. 25, 4; 32, 33. — † See Gen. 48, 20; Isa. 65, 15.

§ Daniel 3, 6. — † Chapter 23, 14. — § Or, dreamer. — † 2 Kings 25, 18; chapter 21, 1. — † Chapter 20, 1. — † 2 Kings 9, 11; Acts 26, 24. — † Chapter 20, 2.

18. I have driven them — God was the wind; man, the winnowing shovel. Compare xix, 8; xxiv, 9; and xxv, 18.

19. Ye would not hear — The prophet classes those in exile with those among whom he has laboured at home, and says of them all, "ye would not hear." But it is probable that to many of these leading captives he had personally ministered, and received from them only resistance and persecution.

21. Ahab...Zedekiah — Of these men we have no knowledge outside of this passage. But the manner in which they are mentioned here attests their influence and their infamy. For two crimes, adultery and false prophesying, they would be roasted in the fire by the king of Babylon. The mention of prophesying a lie as one of the crimes for which they suffered may be explained by reference to Jehovah. The king of Babylon punished them for crimes against society; God, for rebellion and sacrilege. But it may be that even the king punished them for speaking lying words, because these words tended to produce uncasiness and incite to revolt.

CONSEQUENCES OF THE LETTER, 24-32.

24. This passage is separated from the preceding by sufficient time for Jeremiah's letter to be carried to Babylon, and for this retaliatory letter of Shemaiah to reach Jerusalem. It is, of course, quite possible that the same men who took Jeremiah's letter to the exiles in Babylon brought back this of Shemaiah. The close historical connexion of these two letters of Jeremiah fully vindicates the arrangement which brings them here side by side. Of this Shemaiah we know nothing but what we learn in this passage. It is probable that his title, the **Nehelamite**, is derived from the place of his birth or former residence. **Zephaniah** — Not the high priest, but probably the governor of the temple, and hence one who had special facilities for punishing Jeremiah. See also chap. xxi. 1.

26. The Lord hath made thee priest — An adroit appeal to his fanatical zeal. Jeremiah charges his failure to punish him as ingratitude to God. **Officers** — Literally, *overseers, men in charge*; the police force of the temple. **Prison, and in the stocks** — As Pashur had already done to Jeremiah. Chap. xx, 2.

stocks. **27** Now therefore why hast thou not reproved Jeremiah of Anathoth, which maketh himself a prophet to you? **28** For therefore he sent unto us in Babylon, saying, *This captivity is long; build ye houses, and dwell in them; and plant gardens, and eat the fruit of them.* **29** And Zephaniah the priest read this letter in the ears of Jeremiah the prophet.

30 Then came the word of the LORD unto Jeremiah, saying, **31** Send to all them of the captivity, saying, Thus saith the LORD concerning Shemaiah the Nehelamite; Because that Shemaiah hath prophesied unto you, and I sent

him not, and he caused you to trust in a lie: **32** Therefore thus saith the LORD; Behold, I will punish Shemaiah the Nehelamite, and his seed: he shall not have a man to dwell among this people; neither shall he behold the good that I will do for my people, saith the LORD; because he hath taught rebellion against the LORD.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, **2** Thus speaketh the LORD God of Israel, saying, Write thee all the words that I have spoken unto thee in a book. ■ For, lo, the

γ Verse 5.—α Chap. 28. 15.

α Chap. 28. 16.—6 Heb. *revolt.*

27. Jeremiah of Anathoth—This sounds almost like an anticipatory echo of "Jesus of Nazareth." It sounds as if spoken contemptuously. **Maketh himself a prophet**—In this sentence is concentrated all pharisaic bitterness. He is a sacrilegious pretender, called by himself and not by God.

29. Read this letter in the ears of Jeremiah—For what purpose we are not told, but it would seem that Zephaniah was friendly to him.

32. I will punish Shemaiah, etc.—He said that the day of deliverance was near, but it is so distant that his race will become extinct before it arrives. Rejecting God's time, and setting up one of his own, he will see neither the one nor the other. The day of redemption will never dawn on him.

CHAPTER XXX.

INTRODUCTORY—THE THEME, 1-3.

The section of this book upon which we now enter stands in pleasing contrast with the body of the volume. For the most part Jeremiah is occupied with the sins and sorrows of the people, the calamities in the midst of which he lived, and by which God was chastening them into a deeper spirituality and a higher purity. But in these four chapters he goes below the present adverse fortunes of God's people, and dwells joyfully on the nation's relation to a covenant-keeping God, by whom they will be made to triumph. And it is a most interesting fact, and one which illustrates impressively the victorious faith of this

"man of sorrows," that a portion of this passage was written in the tenth year of Zedekiah, when the despair and misery of the people were approaching their culmination. Just as the old Romans actually mapped out and sold the very ground on which their confident enemies were encamped, so Jeremiah calmly reckons on the possession of this land by his people in spite of their long captivity; and, as symbolical of their possession, buys the field at Anathoth.

These four chapters have been divided by Hengstenburg into three portions. 1) Chaps. xxx and xxxi, "a triumphal hymn of Israel's salvation." 2) Chap. xxxii gives an account of the symbolical act of the buying a piece of hereditary property in Anathoth, and the message of God's explanation thereof. 3) Chap. xxxiii dwells in prophetic language on the re-establishment of the Levitical priesthood and the Davidic throne. The whole passage is thus devoted to God's changeless, invincible covenant with his people, assuring them of mercy and salvation.

1. The word, etc.—The heading of the entire prophecy to the end of chap. xxxi.

2. Write . . . a book—Because these words were for the distant future, and for all God's people, however widely scattered. He who speaks, addresses those who are *present* as to time and space: he who *writes*, takes a wider range in both respects. **All the words, etc.**—This phrase is lim-

days come, saith the LORD, that ^a I will bring again the captivity of my people Israel and Judah, saith the LORD: ^b and I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it.

4 And these *are* the words that the LORD spake concerning Israel and concerning Judah. 5 For thus saith the LORD; We have heard a voice of trembling, ¹ of fear, and not of peace. **■** Ask ye now, and see whether ² a man doth travail with child? wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins, ^c as a woman in travail, and all faces are turned into paleness? 7 ^d Alas! for that day *is* great, ^e so that none *is* like it: it *is* even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it. 8 For it shall come to pass in that day, saith the LORD of hosts, *that* I will break his

yoke from off thy neck, and will burst thy bonds, and strangers shall no more serve themselves of him: 9 But they shall serve the LORD their God, and ^f David their king, whom I will ^g raise up unto them.

10 Therefore ^h fear thou not, O my servant Jacob, saith the LORD; neither be dismayed, O Israel: for, lo, I will save thee from afar, and thy seed ⁱ from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return, and shall be in rest, and be quiet, and none shall make *him* afraid.

11 For I *am* with thee, saith the LORD, to save thee: ^k though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, ^l yet will I not make a full end of thee; but I will correct thee ^m in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished. 12 For thus saith the LORD, ⁿ Thy bruise *is* incurable; *and* thy

^a Ver. 18; chap. 32. 44; Ezek. 39. 25; Amos 9. 14, 15.—^b Chap. 16. 15.—^c Or, there is *fear*, and *not* peace.—^d Heb. *a* *mule*.—^e Chap. 4. 31; 6. 24.—^f Joel 2. 11, 31; Amos 5. 18; Zeph. 1. 14, etc.—^g Dan. 12. 1.—^h Isa. 55. 3, 4; Ezek.

34. 23; 37. 24; Hos. 3. 5.—ⁱ Luke 1. 69; Acts 2. 30; 13. 23.—^j Isa. 41. 13; 42. 5; 44. 2; chap. 46. 27, 28.—^k Chap. 3. 18.—^l Amos 9. 8.—^m Chap. 4. 27.—ⁿ Psa. 6. 1; Isa. 27. 8; chap. 10. 24; 46. 28.—^o 2 Chron. 36. 16; chap. 15. 18.

ited to this prophecy, and is more fully defined in the next verse.

3. **Israel and Judah**—The prophet does not restrict himself to the kingdom of Judah, whose fate then hung in the balance, but includes Israel as being a component part of the theocracy. Though the kingdom of Israel had been extinct for generations, yet his faith staggers not at God's covenant promise. From such allusions as that in Luke ii, 36, we are led to infer that some of the tribal remnants of Israel returned with Judah to Palestine.

JUDGMENT ON THE NATIONS, 4-7.

5. **A voice of trembling**, etc.—This comforting prophecy has a most dramatic beginning. This verse seems to be located in the very darkest hour of their national night. The excitement and alarm consequent on the approach of the Medo-Persian army is here depicted. Though this coming was to work deliverance, yet at the first it produces only fear and apprehension.

6. **Every man with his hands on his loins**—As if in extreme pain, like unto a woman in the pangs of childbirth.

7. **That day**—Namely, of the cap-

tivity of Babylon. Comp. Joel ii, 11; Amos v, 18.

ISRAEL'S DELIVERANCE, 8-11.

8. **His yoke**—Israel's yoke, see on 1 Kings xii, 4; Isa. ix, 3. **Strangers... no more serve themselves**—Their captivity shall come to a perpetual end.

9. **David their king**—The divine David—the Messiah—the antetypal David.

10. **From afar**—The distance is not invincible to Jehovah's power. The mention of **seed**, however, suggests that this glad hour of deliverance may be in the still distant future.

11. **Yet... not make a full end of thee**—See chap. iv, 27; v, 18. The calamities of God's people are not for their destruction, but their correction. "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth." So, in a broader sense, all physical evil is in the interest of the kingdom of God. Pain and sorrow, sickness and death, are all sent on an evangelical mission.

ISRAEL'S DIRE NECESSITY AND JEHOVAH'S MERCY, 12-17.

12. **Incurable**—That is, to human thought. But the things that seemed impossible to man were yet possible with God.

wound *is* grievous. **13** *There is* none to plead thy cause, ^athat thou mayest be bound up: ^othou hast no healing medicines. **14** ^pAll thy lovers have forgotten thee; they seek thee not; for I have wounded thee with the wound ^qof an enemy, with the chastisement ^rof a cruel one, for the multitude of thine iniquity; ^s*because* thy sins were increased. **15** Why ^tcriest thou for thine affliction? thy sorrow *is* incurable for the multitude of thine iniquity: *because* thy sins were increased, I have done these things unto thee. **16** Therefore all they that devour thee ^ushall be devoured; and all thine adversaries, every one of them, shall go into captivity; and they that spoil thee shall be a spoil, and all that prey upon thee will I give for a prey. **17** ^vFor I will restore

³ Heb. *for binding up*, or, *pressing*. — ^o Chap. 8. 22. — ^p Lam. 1. 2. — ^q Job 13. 24; 16. 9; 19. 11. — ^r Job 30. 21. — ^s Chap. 5. 6. — ^t Chap. 15. 18. — ^u Exod. 23. 22; Isa. 33. 1; 41. 11;

14. Lovers—Allied peoples; such, for instance, as Egypt and Syria. Comp. chaps. xxii, 20; xxvii, 3. **Wound of an enemy**—As it appeared; merciless and severe.

15. Why criest thou, etc.—It is too late for prayers and lamentations to avail.

16. Therefore—Looking back to verse 13.—**They that spoil thee shall be a spoil.** Retribution in kind is here threatened; and it is such retribution that under God's economy is always inflicted. In the working of law in every realm there is always a tendency to exact satisfaction in the very matter, and indeed in the very form, of the offence. Only dimly is this seen in providence, so various and complicated are the workings of law here; but as we come into simpler and more easily comprehended realms, we are amazed and awe-stricken at the exactness with which the penalty is adjusted to the offence.

17. They called thee an Outcast—But by God's blessing thou "shalt be called Hephzibah, and thy land Beulah." Isa. lxii, 4. **Zion, whom no man seeketh after**—Some have taken this phrase as explanatory of the preceding, in the sense that Zion, taken etymologically, means wasteness or aridity; but this etymology is disputed, and is not necessary to an

health unto thee, and I will heal thee of thy wounds, saith the Lord; because they called thee an Outcast, *saying*, This *is* Zion, whom no man seeketh after.

18 Thus saith the Lord; Behold, ^wI will bring again the captivity of Jacob's tents, and ^xhave mercy on his dwellingplaces; and the city shall be builded upon her own ^yheap, and the palace shall remain after the manner thereof. **19** And ^zout of them shall proceed thanksgiving and the voice of them that make merry: ^aand I will multiply them, and they shall not be few; I will also glorify them, and they shall not be small. **20** Their children also shall be ^bas aforesaid, and their congregation shall be established before me, and I will punish all that oppress them. **21** And their nobles shall be of them—

chap. 10. 25. — ^v Chap. 33. 6. — ^w Verse 3; chap. 33. 7, 11. — ^x Psa. 102. 13. — ^y Or, *little hill*. — ^z Isa. 35. 10; 51. 11; chap. 31. 4, 12, 13; 33. 10, 11. — ^a Zech. 10. 8. — ^b Isa. 1. 26.

intelligible understanding of the sentence. The meaning simply is, that Zion is so insignificant that no man will even take the trouble to inquire after her. As to the whole promise, it has been well observed, that the extremity of the people will be no obstacle to God's grace, but rather **its** chosen opportunity.

THE BLESSEDNESS OF RESTORATION, 18–24.

18. The captivity of Jacob's tents—The term "tents" suggests that the stay of the Judahites in Chaldea was to be but temporary. It may also suggest the poverty and wandering condition of the people in that land. **Heap**—Not of ruins, but for defence and safety. The prime condition of strength in the position of a city was, that it should be on an elevation, either natural or artificial. The term here employed—*Tel*—is frequently a part of the names of cities. Comp. re *Tel-Abib*. Ezek. iii, 15. **Palace shall remain**, etc.—Rather, *the palace shall be inhabited*, etc.

20. Children . . . congregation—Unmistakable signs of established life and prosperity.

21–24. Their nobles, etc.—The real thought in this text is much obscured in the translation. Keil renders the passage thus: *And his leader shall*

seives, and their governor shall proceed from the midst of them; and I will cause him to draw near, and he shall approach unto me: for who is this that engaged his heart to approach unto me? saith the LORD. **22** And ye shall be my people, and I will be your God. **23** Behold, the whirlwind of the LORD goeth forth with fury, a continuing whirlwind: it shall fall with pain upon the head of the wicked. **24** The fierce anger of the LORD shall not return, until he have done it, and until he have performed the intents of his heart: in the latter days ye shall consider it.

^v Gen. 49. 10.—^w Num. 16. 5.—^x Chap. 24. 7; 31. 1, 33; 32. 28; Exod. 11. 20; 36. 28; 37. 27.—^y Chap. 23. 19, 20; 25. 32.—^z Heb. cutting.
^a Or, remain.—^b Gen. 49. 1.—^c Chap. 30. 24.—^d Chap. 30. 22.—^e Num. 10. 33; Deut. 1. 33;

spring from himself; and his ruler shall go forth from his midst; and I will bring him near, so that he shall approach to me: for who is he that became surety for his life in drawing near to me? saith Jehovah. This text had but a partial fulfilment in the partial independency which the Jews enjoyed subsequent to the captivity; its complete fulfilment comes only in the Messianic reign. "Out of thee shall come a governor that shall rule my people Israel." The language, **I will cause him to draw near**, etc., has a technical sense, involving the priestly idea. It implies that the King from among themselves will be also their Priest, thus uniting in himself all that is profoundly representative of the people's life. The phrase **performed** (or *pledged*) **the intents of his heart**, looks primarily to the terrors which were made to surround the person of an oriental monarch, (see Esther iv, 11,) but really to the necessity of entering into the holy of holies in behalf of sinners only by blood, by offering up the life of an acceptable victim. The full and ultimate reference, then, is to the vicarious death of the true Israel's divine King.

CHAPTER XXXI.

RESTORATION FOR ALL THE FAMILIES OF ISRAEL, 1-40.

1. **At the same time**—Namely, in the "latter days" of chap. xxx, 24,

CHAPTER XXXI.

AT the same time, saith the LORD, will I be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be my people. **2** Thus saith the LORD, The people which were left of the sword found grace in the wilderness; even Israel, when I went to cause him to rest. **3** The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee. **4** Again I will build thee, and thou shalt be built, O virgin of Israel: thou shalt again be adorned with thy tabrets, and shalt go forth

Psa. 95. 11; Isa. 63. 14.—1 Heb. from afar.—^d Mal. 1. 2.—^e Rom. 11. 28, 29.—2 Or, have I extended lovingkindness unto thee.—^f Hos. 11. 4.—^g Chap. 33. 7.—3 Or, timbrels.—^h Exod. 15. 20; Judges 11. 34; Psa. 149. 3.

when God's anger shall light on his enemies. Then shall men be made to "discern between the righteous and the wicked; between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not." Mal. iii, 18. **Will I be the God**, etc.—An all-comprehending promise, carrying in its bosom all possible good—safety, success, victory, glory. And this he will be, not to Judah alone, and not to select and fortunate individuals and families, but to all the families of Israel.

2. **The people**—Those of Jeremiah's time, and not; as the language might suggest and as some have thought, of Moses's time. See chap. li, 50. **Wilderness**—Babylon.

3. **Of old**—Better, as the margin, *from afar*; in allusion to the sense of distance from God which would be wrought by their material separation from that sanctuary which they had always regarded as the chosen seat and special abode of Israel's God. **With lovingkindness have I drawn**—The marginal reading on this verse is also to be preferred: *I have extended*, that is, continued, *lovingkindness unto thee*.

4. **Virgin**—See on chap. xiv, 17. **Tabrets**—Better, as in the margin, *timbrels*; a certain drum-like musical instrument, carried or worn especially by women in times of rejoicing. See Judges xi, 34; 1 Sam. xviii, 6; Job xxi, 12; Isa. xxx, 32.

in the dances of them that make merry. **5** ¹Thou shalt yet plant vines upon the mountains of Samaria: the planters shall plant, and shall ²eat them as common things. **6** For there shall be a day, *that* the watchmen upon the mount Ephraim shall cry, ³Arise ye, and let us go up to Zion unto the Lord our God. **7** For thus saith the Lord; ⁴Sing with gladness for Jacob, and shout among the chief of the nations: publish ye, praise ye, and say, O Lord, save thy people, the remnant of Israel. **8** Behold, I will bring them ⁵from the north country, and ⁶gather them from the coasts of the earth, *and* with them the blind and the lame, the woman with child and her that travaileth with child together: a great company shall return thither. **9** ⁷They shall come with

weeping, and with ⁸supplications will I lead them: I will cause them to walk ⁹by the rivers of waters in a straight way, wherein they shall not stumble: for I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my ¹⁰firstborn.

10 Hear the word of the Lord, O ye nations, and declare *it* in the isles afar off, and say, He that scattered Israel ¹¹will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd *doth* his flock. **11** For ¹²the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him ¹³from the hand of *him that was* stronger than he. **12** Therefore they shall come and sing in ¹⁴the height of Zion, and shall flow together to ¹⁵the goodness of the Lord, for wheat, and for wine, and for oil, and for the young of the flock and of the herd: and their soul shall be as a ¹⁶watered garden;

¹ Isa. 65. 21; Amos 9. 14. — ⁴ Heb. *profane* them, Deut. 20. 6; 28. 30. — ⁵ Isa. 2. 3; Micah 4. 2. — ⁶ Isa. 12. 5, 6. — ⁷ Chap. 3. 12, 18; 23. 8. — ⁸ Ezek. 20. 34, 41; 34. 13. — ⁹ Psal. 126. 5, 6; chap. 50. 4.

⁵ Or, *favours*, Zech. 12. 10. — ⁶ Isa. 35. 8; 43. 19; 49. 10, 11. — ⁷ Exod. 4. 22. — ⁸ Isa. 40. 11; Ezek. 34. 12, 13, 14. — ⁹ Isa. 44. 23; 48. 20. — ¹⁰ Isa. 49. 24, 25. — ¹¹ Ezek. 17. 23; 20. 40. — ¹² Hos. 3. 5. — ¹³ Isa. 58. 11.

5. Mountains of Samaria—Mentioned as the capital and sanctuary of the ten tribes. For many generations they had been exiled from this abode of their strength and pride; but now the promise is, that they shall eat their grapes there **as common things**; margin, *shall profane them*. For the first three years after planting the vines the Jews were forbidden to pluck the grapes, and the fruit of the fourth year was to be consecrated to the Lord, (see Lev. xix, 23–25, Deut. xx, 6,) so that not until the fifth year could the fruits be eaten as “common things.” This vividly suggests permanence of abode.

6. Watchmen—That is, for the new moon, as marking the beginning of the religious festival. **Mount Ephraim** is mentioned as another representative section of the territory of the ten tribes. That the cry should be heard here, **Let us go up to Zion**, betokens a restored unity.

7. Sing...shout...praise—In the next three verses we have a bright and joyous picture of the return of the people. As if in response to the cry of the watchman, the prophet calls for the voice of singing and gladness, for praise and the proclamation of deliverance. The whole passage is one of

those vivid emotional passages in which this book so much abounds.

8. The blind and the lame, the woman with child, etc.—Are mentioned as illustrating the completeness of the deliverance. **Thither**, should be *hither*.

9. Weeping—For joy, indeed, in view of God's wonderful goodness in permitting their return; and yet this weeping suggests the dark background of their great sin and sorrow. **The rivers of waters** represent God's gracious supply of their need in this desert land. **Ephraim is my firstborn**—The family of Joseph, as we are told in 1 Chron. v, 2, was selected for the honour of primogeniture. They were among those who went first into captivity, and are compensated by this distinction in the return. But no disparagement of Judah is intended.

10. Isles—Rather, *coast-lands*. God will give his people victory and deliverance, not only in the eyes of the nations immediately about them, but even the distant dwellers on the coast-lands of the Mediterranean shall in this **hear the word of the Lord**.

11. Stronger than he—But not stronger than God.

12. Their soul shall be as a watered garden, in which shall be

* and they shall not sorrow any more at all. **13** Then shall the virgin rejoice in the dance, both young men and old together: for I will turn their mourning into joy, and will comfort them, and make them rejoice from their sorrow. **14** And I will satiate the soul of the priests with fatness, and my people shall be satisfied with my goodness, saith the Lord.

α Isa. 35, 10; 65, 19; Rev. 21, 4.—γ Matt. 2, 17, 18.—δ Josh. 18, 25.

beauty, delight, and abundant supply: an inner paradise.

13. Young men and old shall rejoice together—See Zechariah viii, 4, 5.

14. Satisfate—Abundantly satisfy—an image of prosperity. The offerings shall be so numerous that the priests shall scarcely consume the portions which fall to them.

15. A voice was heard—This strophe (15–22) brings to view another side of Israel's restoration. It was to be not merely political and external, but internal and spiritual. This is set forth in a passage of peculiar tenderness. Rachel, their common mother, is represented as lamenting the loss of her children who have gone into exile; and Ephraim, of these very children, bemoans his sins. In view of these the promise is given from the Almighty that they should come again from the land of the enemy. **Ramah**—Probably, as even the Seventy understood, the town of Ramah, which was situated about five English miles to the north of Jerusalem. Why was the lamentation of Rachel heard at Ramah? 1) Most say, because Rachel was buried there, and 1 Sam. x, 2, is quoted in proof of this. But this passage is manifestly inconclusive; for not Ramah, but "Zelzar, in the border of Benjamin," is mentioned as the locality of Rachel's sepulchre, and the assumption that this was at Samuel's native home, and hence Ramah, is most gratuitous. From Genesis xxxv, 16, 19, we learn that Rachel died "on the way to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem," and that "there was but a little way to come to Bethlehem," hence very plainly her tomb was near Bethiehem, which

15 Thus saith the Lord; "A voice was heard in * Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping; Rachel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children, because * they were not. **16** Thus saith the Lord; Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears: for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the Lord; and * they shall come again from the land of the enemy.

α Genesis 42, 13. — δ Verses 4, 5; Ezra 1, 5; Hosea 1, 11.

is six miles south of Jerusalem, and not Ramah, nearly as far north. This, too, falls in well with Matt. ii, 18. 2) Others say that Ramah is mentioned because here the exiles were assembled preparatory to being carried away. (See chap. xl, 1.) But this is weeping, not over those who are to go into captivity, but those who have already gone. Yet the fact that this was the place of rendezvous gives, it must be confessed, special interest to the language. 3) Some have conjectured another Ramah, which was situated to the south of Jerusalem, and so at or near Rachel's tomb. This conjecture is entirely unsupported, and yet not impossible. The name Ramah (*height*) is certainly one that would apply to many localities. But the fact of no other Ramah in this general region, which is well identified, stands strongly, if not conclusively, against this conjecture. 4) Others, as Keil, say that the lamentation was heard in Ramah "as the most loftily situated border town of the two kingdoms, whence the wailing that had arisen sounded far and near, and could be heard in Judah." Rachel is named as the representative of that parental love shown by Israel in the pain felt when the people were lost. This explanation is, on the whole, to be preferred. We ought not, however, to leave out of account the fact, that this height was situated near Jerusalem, and so a voice in Ramah would be heard in the city and country alike.

16. Thy work shall be rewarded—Literally, *there is a reward for thy work*. Rachel weeps for the loss of her children: hence the reward spoken of must be their restoration.

17 And there is hope in thine end, saith the Lord, that thy children shall come again to their own border.

18 I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself *thus*; Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke: ^cturn thou me, and I shall be turned; for thou art the Lord my God. **19** Surely ^dafter that I was turned, I repented; and after that I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh: I was ashamed, yea, even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth. **20** Is Ephraim my dear son? *is he* a pleasant child? for since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still: ^etherefore my bowels ^fare troubled for him; ^gI will surely have mercy upon him, saith the Lord. **21** Set thee up waymarks, make thee high heaps: ^hset thine heart toward the highway, *even* the way which thou wentest: turn again, O virgin of Israel, turn again to these thy cities.

22 How long wilt thou ⁱgo about, O thou ^jbacksliding daughter? for the Lord hath created a new thing in the

earth. A woman shall compass a man. **23** Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; As yet they shall use this speech in the land of Judah and in the cities thereof, when I shall bring again their captivity; ^kThe Lord bless thee, O habitation of justice, and ^lmountain of holiness. **24** And there shall dwell in Judah itself, and ^min all the cities thereof together, husbandmen, and they that go forth with flocks. **25** For I have satiated the weary soul, and I have replenished every sorrowful soul. **26** Upon this I awaked, and beheld; and my sleep was sweet unto me.

27 Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that ⁿI will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of man, and with the seed of beast. **28** And it shall come to pass, *that* like as I have ^owatched over them, ^pto pluck up, and to break down, and to throw down, and to destroy, and to afflict; so will I watch over them, ^qto build, and to plant, saith the Lord. **29** ^rIn those days they shall say no more, The fathers have eaten a sour

^c Lam. 5. 21. — ^d Deut. 30. 2. — ^e Deut. 32. 36; Isa. 63. 15; Hos. 11. 8. — ^f Heb. *sound*. — ^g Isa. 57. 18; Hos. 14. 4. — ^h Chap. 50. 5. — ⁱ Chap. 2. 18, 23, 36. — ^j Chap. 3. 6, 8, 11, 12, 14, 22. — ^k Psa.

122. 5, 6, 7, 8; Isa. 1. 26. — ^l Zech. 8. 3. — ^m Chap. 33. 12, 13. — ⁿ Ezek. 36. 9, 10, 11; Hos. 2. 23; Zech. 10. 9. — ^o Chap. 44. 27. — ^p Chap. 1. 10; 18. 7. — ^q Chap. 24. 6. — ^r Ezek. 18. 2, 3.

18. As a bullock unaccustomed—Literally, *like an untamed calf*. See Hosea x, 11.

19. After that I was turned—“Turned” is equivocal, and may mean either turning *away* from God or turning *to* him. Here it is the former.

21. High heaps—Pillars, or signposts.

22. A woman shall compass a man—Numerous explanations of these unusual words have been given; as “The woman shall be changed to a man,” (*Ewald*); “The woman shall court the man,” (*Hitzig*); “The woman shall keep close to the man,” (*Hengstenberg*); “The woman shall turn the man to herself,” (*Nügelbach*); “The woman shall protect the man,” (*Gesenius, et al.*) etc. But neither one of them perfectly suits the connexion. and most of them are lexically indefensible. The **new thing** is, that the woman (Israel) shall compass the man (Jehovah:) that is, embrace him lovingly and trustfully. This is “new” in that it is an intimacy of union surpassing the former times. Such is

Jehovah's condescension, that Israel is permitted to do what Christ forbade to Mary Magdalene when he said, “Touch me not.”

23. As yet—Rather, *once more, again*. **Mountain of holiness**—Jerusalem, including Zion as well as Moriah.

24. Go forth—Rather, *go about*. The phrase describes the ordinary life of the shepherd going hither and thither in the interest of the flock. The whole verse is a picture of peace and prosperity in contrast with the insecurity and desolation of war.

26. I awaked—The prophet awoke from his sleep of prophetic ecstasy, and its revelations were satisfying and refreshing.

27. Sow . . . with the seed of man, etc.—Will give a generous harvest of life, so that it will almost seem as if children and cattle sprang from the very ground.

28. Watched—See chap. i, 12, and the note there.

29. They shall say no more, etc.—There is here no incongruity with those passages which describe God as

grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge. **30** *But every one shall die for his own iniquity: every man that eateth the sour grape, his teeth shall be set on edge.

31 Behold, the 'days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: **32** Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that "I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, ⁷ although I was a husband unto them, saith the Lord: **33** *But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel: After those days, saith the Lord, "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; *and will be their God, and they shall be my people. **34** And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother,

^s Gal. 6. 5, 7. — ^t Chap. 32. 40; 33. 14; Ezek. 37. 26; Heb. 8. 8-12; 10. 16, 17. — ^u Deut. 1. 31. — ^v Or, *should I have continued a husband unto them?* — ^w Chap. 32. 40. — ^x Psa. 40. 8; Ezek. 11. 19, 20; 36. 26, 27; 2 Cor. 3. 3. — ^y Chap. 24. 7; 30. 22; 32. 38. — ^z Isa. 54. 13; John 6. 45;

"visiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the children." Both are exactly true. The fearfully destructive nature of sin is illustrated in that it casts a blight upon everything it touches. A curse rests on the physical universe and on the processes of nature on account of it. Children suffer the *consequences* of their parents' sins, but *no being is ever punished for the sins of another*. There cannot be punishment for sin without a conscience of sin. If a man dies it will be for his own iniquity.

31. The days come—Days of blessed promise—a period marked as the exodus itself. The contrast between the slavery of Egypt and the freedom and prosperity of Palestine is to be followed by another contrast more notable and blessed. **A new covenant**—One spiritual rather than temporal and material; universal and not partial; permanent and not temporary; written on the heart instead of on the tables of stone: the down-beaming of God's love rather than his law; a covenant of life and not of death. It was "new," not as different from the old, but as more spiritual and more glorious.

saying, Know the Lord: for ^v they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for ^w I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

35 Thus saith the Lord, ^a which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth ^b the sea when the waves thereof roar; ^c The Lord of hosts is his name: **36** ^d If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the Lord, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever. **37** Thus saith the Lord; ^e If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the Lord.

38 Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that the city shall be built to the Lord ^f from the tower of Hananeel unto

1 Cor. 2. 10; 1 John 2. 20. — ^z Chap. 33. 8; 50. 20; Micah 7. 18; Acts 10. 43; 13. 39; Rom. 11. 27. — ^a Gen. 1. 16; Psa. 72. 5, 17; 89. 2, 36, 37; 119. 91. — ^b Isa. 51. 15. — ^c Chap. 10. 16. — ^d Psa. 148. 6; Isa. 54. 9, 19; chap. 35. 20. — ^e Chap. 33. 22. — ^f Neh. 3. 1; Zech. 14. 10.

33. I will put my law in their inward parts—So far from being set aside or abrogated, it shall be enthroned and enshrined at the source and centre of life. For the best commentary on these words, see the Sermon on the Mount.

34. I will forgive their iniquity—I will break down the barriers of separation and bring back the lost harmony. The first good thing which the Lord can do to a sinner is to forgive his iniquity.

36. If those ordinances depart—The appeal is to the unchangeableness of nature's laws as a type and a pledge of the new covenant. Revelation does not begin by casting down nature or arraying itself against it; it postulates nature, and proceeds from it to what is higher and more glorious. **A nation**—Rather, *a people*.

37. If heaven above can be measured, etc.—The illimitableness of the material universe is a type of God's inexhaustible and boundless love.

38. To the Lord—Not to his honour merely, but for his possession and dwelling-place. **From the tower of Hananeel**, etc.—The tower of Ha-

the gate of the corner. **39** And ^athe measuring line shall yet go forth over against it upon the hill Gareb, and shall compass about to Goath. **40** And the whole valley of the dead bodies, and of the ashes, and all the fields unto the brook of Kidron, ^b unto the corner of the horse gate toward the east, ^c shall be holy unto the Lord; it shall not be plucked up, nor thrown down any more for ever.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord ^ain the tenth year of Zedekiah king of Judah, which *was* in the eighteenth year of Nebuchadrezzar. **2** For then the king of Babylon's army besieged Jerusalem: and Jeremiah the prophet was shut up ^bin the court of the prison, which *was* in the king of Judah's

^a Ezek. 40. 8; Zech. 2. 1.—^b 2 Chron. 28. 15; Neh. 3. 28.—^c Joel 3. 17.—^d 2 Kings 25. 1, 2; chap. 39. 1.

house. **3** For Zedekiah king of Judah had shut him up, saying, Wherefore dost thou prophesy, and say, Thus saith the Lord, ^c Behold, I will give this city into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall take it; **4** And Zedekiah king of Judah ^dshall not escape out of the hand of the Chaldeans, but shall surely be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon, and shall speak with him mouth to mouth, and his eyes shall behold his eyes; **5** And he shall lead Zedekiah to Babylon, and there shall he be ^euntil I visit him, saith the Lord: ^fthough ye fight with the Chaldeans, ye shall not prosper?

6 And Jeremiah said, The word of the Lord came unto me, saying, **7** Behold, Hanameel the son of Shallum thine uncle shall come unto thee, saying,

end of the siege. He seems, however, to have enjoyed considerable liberty, being kept, not in the "dungeon," (xxxviii. 13,) but in the "court of the prison," (xxxvii. 21,) where his friends were permitted access to him. So far from contradicting the thirty-seventh chapter as to the cause of Jeremiah's imprisonment, this account is fully confirmatory, differing indeed in form and in fullness, but harmonizing perfectly in spirit and substance.

^b Neh 3. 25; chap. 33. 1; 37. 21; 38. 6; 39. 14.—^c Chap. 34. 2.—^d Chap. 34. 3; 38. 14, 23; 39. 5; 52. 9.—^e Chap. 27. 22.—^f Chap. 21. 4; 33. 5.

naneel was situated at the northeast corner of the city wall, (see Neh. iii. 1, Zech. iv. 10,) while the **gate of the corner** probably answered to the present Jaffa gate, near the northwest corner of the city. The expression describes the whole northside, and is equal almost to *its whole extent*.

39. Gareb—Cannot be certainly identified. Probably the etymology of the word (*itching*) correctly points to a locality set apart for lepers, and hence outside of the city; perhaps toward the southwest. As to **Goath** nothing is known.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

INTRODUCTORY, 1-5.

1. The tenth year of Zedekiah—

In chapter i. 3, "the eleventh year of Zedekiah" is mentioned as the *terminus ad quem* of Jeremiah's prophecies. This chapter, then, is comprehended in the general title comprised in the first three verses of the first chapter. The siege of Jerusalem had now been in progress a year. (Chap. xxxix. 1.) The coming of the Egyptian army had interrupted it, but upon the defeat of the Egyptians it was immediately resumed.

2. Jeremiah the prophet was shut up—He had been arrested in an attempt to flee from Jerusalem, (xxxvii. 13,) and was kept in custody until the

5. Until I visit him—What a fearfully pregnant meaning had this word "visit!" and how mercifully concealed from this man, who was coming to a fate darker than he could well conceive—of the murder of his sons, the putting out of his own eyes, and the sufferings and ignominy of hopeless confinement in a Babylonian prison to the day of his death. See chap. xxxix. 6, 7; lii. 11.

JEREMIAH BUYS THE FIELD IN ANATHOTH. 6-15.

7. Thine uncle—This, as we learn from the following verse, refers to Shallum, and not Hanameel, to which name, according to the laws of Hebrew construction, it is also applicable. The original word for "uncle" is very general in its import, being sometimes rendered "beloved," as for instance in Isaiah v. 1, which is literally, "I

Buy thee my field that *is* in Anathoth: for the *right of redemption is thine* to buy *it*. **8** So Hanameel mine uncle's son came to me in the court of the prison according to the word of the LORD, and said unto me, Buy my field, I pray thee, that *is* in Anathoth, which *is* in the country of Benjamin: for the right of inheritance *is thine*, and the redemption *is thine*; buy *it* for thyself. Then I knew that this *was* the word of the LORD. **9** And I bought the field of Hanameel my uncle's son, that *was* in Anathoth, and ^h weighed him the money, *even* ⁱ seventeen shekels of silver. **10** And I ² subscribed the evidence, and sealed *it*, and took witnesses, and weighed *him* the money in the balances. **11** So I took the evidence of the purchase, *both* that which was sealed *according to the law and custom, and*

g Lev. 25, 24, 25, 32; Ruth 4, 4.—*h* Gen. 23, 16; Zech. 11, 12.—*i* Or, *seven shekels and ten*

will sing to my well beloved a song of my uncle (*beloved*) touching his vineyard." **The right of redemption**—See Lev. xxv, 25. He who had the right of redemption had also the right of pre-emption, both having the same object, namely, to preserve the possession for the family.

8. The right of inheritance—See Numbers xxvii, 11. It would seem that Jeremiah was the lawful heir. According to Numbers xxxv, 5, it must have been within the distance of 2,000 cubits of Anathoth.

9. Seventeen shekels—Two things arrest attention in this price: 1) The peculiar form, literally "*seven shekels and ten of silver*." 2) Its smallness, about ten dollars. Possibly the first may be explained as a legal formula, while the second may be due to the consideration that the sale of land was, correctly speaking, only the sale of the use of it up to the year of jubilee. And then, the value of land depends largely on the state of society and the political prospects of the country. Other cases in which the price of land in Palestine is mentioned are the sale of Araunah's threshing-floor with the oxen and implements for fifty shekels, (2 Sam. xxiv, 24,) and the potter's field to the chief priests for thirty shekels. Matt. xxvii, 7.

10. I subscribed the evidence,

that which was open: **12** And I gave the evidence of the purchase unto Baruch the son of Neriah, the son of Maaseiah, in the sight of Hanameel mine uncle's son, and in the presence of the ^k witnesses that subscribed the book of the purchase, before all the Jews that sat in the court of the prison.

13 And I charged Baruch before them, saying, **14** Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Take these evidences, this evidence of the purchase, both which is sealed, and this evidence which is open; and put them in an earthen vessel, that they may continue many days. **15** For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Houses and fields and vineyards ^l shall be possessed again in this land.

16 Now when I had delivered the evidence of the purchase unto Baruch

pieces of silver.—² Heb. *wrote in the book*.—ⁱ Chap. 36, 4.—^k See Isa. 8, 2.—^l Verses 37, 43.

etc.—The marginal reading is better, "*I wrote in the book*," that is, the particulars of the transaction. Here we have, with unusual fulness, the description of an important business transaction. Written documents, witnesses, the weighing of money, and the sealing up of one of the copies of the bill of purchase for public use and permanent preservation. All this points unmistakably to a well-organized state of society. These deeds of purchase were to be put in an earthen vessel to preserve them from decay and destruction during the long years of exile. **Sealed**, in this passage, means "fastened together by a seal," and not "attested by a seal," as is the common sense in modern business documents.

15. Possessed—Literally, *bought*. The impending ruin would not be permanent, but there would be a restoration, and hence title deeds would be important.

JEREMIAH'S PRAYER FOR FULLER REVELATION, 16-23.

16. The transaction was in itself very simple and intelligible, and the reason for it is plainly set forth. But what was predicted for the future seemed so utterly improbable that Jeremiah, for himself and for the people, makes appeal to God in a

the son of Neriah, I prayed unto the LORD, saying, **17** Ah Lord God! behold, ^mthou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, and ⁿthere is nothing ^atoo hard for thee: **18** Thou showest ^olovingkindness unto thousands, and recompensest the iniquity of the fathers into the bosom of their children after them: The Great, ^pThe Mighty God, **19** The LORD of hosts, ^{is} his name; **19** ^rGreat in counsel, and mighty in ^swork: for thine ^teyes are open upon all the ways of the sons of men, ^uto give every one according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings: **20** Which hast set signs and wonders in the land of Egypt, ^veven unto this day, and in Israel, and among other men; and hast made thee ^wa name, as at this day; **21** And ^xhast brought forth thy people Israel out of the land of Egypt with signs, and with wonders, and with a strong hand, and with a stretched out

arm, and with great terror; **22** And hast given them this land, which thou didst swear to their fathers to give them, ^ya land flowing with milk and honey; **23** And they came in, and possessed it; but ^zthey obeyed not thy voice, neither walked in thy law; they have done nothing of all that thou commandest them to do: therefore thou hast caused all this evil to come upon them. **24** Behold the ^amounts, they are come unto the city to take it; and the city ^bis given into the hand of the Chaldeans that fight against it, because of ^cthe sword, and of the famine, and of the pestilence: and what thou hast spoken is come to pass; and, behold, thou seest it. **25** And thou hast said unto me, O Lord God, Buy thee the field for money, and take witnesses; ^dfor ^ethe city is given into the hand of the Chaldeans.

26 Then came the word of the LORD unto Jeremiah, saying, **27** Behold, I am the LORD, the ^fGod of all flesh:

^m 2 Kings 19. 15. — ⁿ Gen. 18. 14: verse 27; Luke 1. 37. — ^o 3 Or, *hid from thee*. — ^p Exod. 30. 6; 34. 7; Deut. 5. 9, 10. — ^q Isa. 9. 6. — ^r Chap. 10. 16. — ^s Isa. 28. 29. — ^t Heb. *doing*. — ^u Job 34. 21; Psa. 33. 13; Prov. 5. 21; chap. 16. 17. — ^v Chap. 17. 10. — ^w Exod. 9. 16; 1 Chron. 17. 21;

Isa. 63. 12; Dan. 9. 15. — ^x Exod. 6. 6; 2 Sam. 7. 23; 1 Chron. 17. 21; Psa. 136. 11, 12. — ^y Exod. 3. 8, 17; chap. 11. 5. — ^z Neh. 9. 26; chap. 11. 8; Dan. 9. 10-14. — ^a Or, *engines of shot*, chap. 33. 4. — ^b Verses 25, 36. — ^c Chap. 14. 12. — ^d Or, *though*. — ^e Verse 24. — ^f Num. 16. 22.

prayer which gathers up into itself the essence of Hebrew theology and history. The grand and glorious background of this prayer—changeless and stainless as the very heavens themselves—is God in his eternity, infinity, omnipotence, and righteousness; against which is placed his good providence over Israel, and her sin and punishment. And in view of the determination to give over the city and land to their enemies he seems to plead the difficulty of the command to buy the land.

17. Too hard—Literally, *too wonderful*.

18. Recompensest . . . into the bosom—"The recompense is placed in the bosom because, in the East, the garments are so arranged as to form a pocket there. Thus, then, men must receive and carry with them God's requital for their deeds."—*Dean Smith*.

20. Unto this day—The construction is a pregnant one, and implies *hast continued working signs and wonders among men* "unto this day."

23. Law—Literally, in Hebrew

text, *laws*; but the text here is probably corrupt.

24. Mounts—The ramparts of the besieging army. **Is given**—Not merely a prophetic present, as implying God's purpose, but rhetorical present, implying a certainty because it was as good as done.

25. And thou hast said—An appeal to God for relief. Not to doubt the propriety of the command, but to indicate an oppressive sense of incongruity between it and the conditions, are these words spoken.

JEHOVAH'S GRACIOUS ANSWER, 26-44.

26. Then came the word of the Lord unto Jeremiah—This answer consists of three divisions: 1) It affirms the fearfulness of the calamities impending: 2) It refers them all to the sins of the people: 3) But also states that this is not for final destruction but for discipline, and so will be followed by restoration.

27. The God of all flesh—The supremacy and universality of the divine dominion is here, as everywhere, a ground condition of the Old Testa-

is 'there any thing too hard for me?

28 Therefore thus saith the Lord; Behold, 'I will give this city into the hand of the Chaldeans, and into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, and he shall take it: **29** And the Chaldeans, that fight against this city, shall come and 'set fire on this city, and burn it with the houses, 'upon whose roofs they have offered incense unto Baal, and poured out drink offerings unto other gods, to provoke me to anger. **30** For the children of Israel and the children of Judah 'have only done evil before me from their youth: for the children of Israel have only provoked me to anger with the work of their hands, saith the Lord. **31** For this city hath been to me as 'a provocation of mine anger and of my fury from the day that they built it even unto this day, 'that I should remove it from before my face; **32** Because of all the evil of the children of Israel and of the children of Judah, which they have done to provoke me to anger, 'they, their kings, their princes, their priests, and their prophets,

c Verse 17. — *d* Verse 3. — *e* Chap. 21. 10; 37. 8, 10; 52. 13. — *f* Chap. 19. 13. — *g* Chap. 2. 7; 8. 25; 7. 22-26; 23. 21; Ezek. 20. 28. — *h* 2 Heb. *for my anger*. — *i* 2 Kings 23. 27; 24. 3. — *j* Isa. 1. 4, 6; Dan. 9. 8. — *k* Heb. *neck*. — *l* Chap.

ment relations. See Num. xvi, 22; xxvii, 16. **Too hard**—Literally, *too wonderful*.

28. Will give—Literally, *am giving*.

30. Children of Israel—Israel is mentioned here for two reasons: 1) The name is generic, and so suggests the whole sweep of Jewish history, even from the time when they came forth from Egypt; 2) The fate of Israel would serve as an illustrative example of what awaited Judah.

31. For this city hath been to me . . . a provocation—The construction here is unusual and difficult. The exact force of the original is, *For upon my anger and upon my fury was for me this city*, etc. The meaning seems to be, Jerusalem has been a burden on my wrath; that is, it has called it forth, so that it has been hard to bear with it. **From the day that they built it**—An individualizing phrase for "from the earliest times." Of course the meaning is limited to Jerusalem as a Jewish city.

32. Kings . . . princes . . . priests . . . prophets . . . men of Judah . . . inhab-

and the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. **33** And they have turned unto me the ^{s^k}back, and not the face: though I taught them, 'rising up early and teaching *them*, yet they have not hearkened to receive instruction. **34** But they ^mset their abominations in the house, which is called by my name, to defile it. **35** And they built the high places of Baal, which *are* in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to 'cause their sons and their daughters to pass through *the fire* unto °Molech; 'which I commanded them not, neither came it into my mind, that they should do this abomination, to cause Judah to sin.

36 And now therefore thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, concerning this city, whereof ye say, 'It shall be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence; **37** Behold, I will 'gather them out of all countries, whither I have driven them in mine anger, and in my fury, and in great wrath; and I will bring them again unto this place, and I will cause them 'to

2. 27; 7. 24. — *l* Chap. 7. 13. — *m* Chap. 7. 30, 31; 23. 11; Ezek. 8. 5; 6. — *n* Chap. 7. 31; 19. 5. — *o* Lev. 18. 21; 1 Kings 11. 33. — *p* Chap. 7. 31. — *q* Verse 24. — *r* Deut. 30. 3; chap. 23. 3; 29. 14; 31. 10; Ezek. 37. 21. — *s* Chap. 23. 6; 33. 16.

itants of Jerusalem—Epithets of specification indicating a fearful unanimity in wickedness.

33. Back, and not the face—Thus expressing contemptuous indignity. In the latter part of the verse the construction is impersonal; literally, *there was a teaching of them*, etc.

34, 35. They set their abominations—Their idols. A repetition of chap. vii, 30, 31, except that **Baal** is put for "Tophet" and **Molech** for "in the fire." Molech the *king* and Baal the *lord* are simply different names of the Sun-god, but in altered relations. **In the house**—The temple, which was still standing. **To pass through the fire**—This phrase, here and everywhere, as also the various kindred phrases, implies the literal burning of the children, though as we learn from Ezek. xvi, 21, they may not have been burned alive, but slain first.

37. I will gather them—This is the supreme utterance of the chapter, and is closely connected with verse 27, all the intervening verses being parenthetical.

dwell safely: **38** And they shall be ¹my people, and I will be their God: **39** And I will ²give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me ³for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them: **40** And ⁴I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away ⁵from them, to do them good; but ⁶I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me. **41** Yea, ⁷I will rejoice over them to do them good, and ⁸I will plant them in this land ⁹assuredly with my whole heart and with my whole soul. **42** For thus saith the LORD; ¹⁰Like as I have brought all this great evil upon this people, so will I bring upon them all the good that I have promised them. **43** And ¹¹fields shall be bought in this land, ¹²whereof ye say, *It is desolate without man or beast; it is given into the hand of the Chaldeans.* **44** Men shall buy fields for money, and subscribe evidences, and

¹ Chap. 24. 7; 30. 22; 31. 33. — ² Chap. 24. 7; Ezek. 11. 19, 20. — ³ Heb. *all days*. — ⁴ Isa. 55. 3; chap. 31. 31. — ⁵ 10 Heb. *from after them*. — ⁶ Chap. 31. 33. — ⁷ Deut. 30. 9; Zeph. 3. 17. — ⁸ Chap. 24. 6; 31. 28; Amos 9. 15. — ⁹ Heb. *in truth, or, stability*.

38. Shall be my people—A promise carrying in its bosom all blissful possibilities.

39. One heart, and one way—Righteousness carries with it inevitably harmony and unity; sin is everywhere and always a note of discord and strife.

40. I will not turn away from them, to do them good—The comma of the English text is misleading, and should be omitted. The meaning is, *I will no longer withhold from them the good they need.*

41. With my whole heart—A loving and unlimited emphasis.

43. Fields shall be bought—Literally, *the field*. The term is used generically, and implies a prosperity that brings the country at large into use. Keil, however, understands the article here to look back to the field of Hanneel.

44. In the land of Benjamin, etc.—The specifications of place here are evidently for emphasis, and serve to bring the glorious certainty more vividly to the minds of those who should hear and read this prophecy.

seal *them*, and take witnesses in ¹the land of Benjamin, and ²in the places about Jerusalem, and in the cities of Judah, and in the cities of the mountains, and in the cities of the valley, and in the cities of the south: for ³I will cause their captivity to return, saith the LORD.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

MOREOVER the word of the LORD came unto Jeremiah the second time, while he was yet ¹shut up in the court of the prison, saying, **2** Thus saith the LORD the ²maker thereof, the LORD that formed it, to establish it; ³The LORD is his name; **3** ⁴Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and ⁵mighty things, which thou knowest not. **4** For thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, concerning the houses of this city, and concerning the houses of the kings of Judah, which are thrown down by ⁶the mounts, and by

² Chap. 31. 28. — ³ Verse 15. — ⁴ Chap. 33. 10. — ⁵ Chap. 17. 26. — ⁶ Chap. 33. 7, 11, 26. — ⁷ Chap. 32. 2, 3. — ⁸ Isa. 37. 26. — ⁹ Or, *JEHOVAH*. — ¹⁰ Exod. 15. 3; Amos 5. 8; 9. 6. — ¹¹ Psal. 91. 15; chap. 29. 12. — ¹² Or, *hidden*, Isa. 48. 6. — ¹³ Chap. 32. 24.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE HAPPINESS OF THE RETURNING EXILES, 1-14.

1. While he—Jeremiah. **Was yet shut up**—Implying the close connexion of this chapter with the preceding.

2. Maker . . . formed . . . establish—The logical order is preserved, but there is ¹progress from extent to intensity of meaning. **The Lord is his name**—This appeal to the import of the name Jehovah suggests the stability of his word and the perpetuity of his covenant. The pronouns in this verse, *thereof* and *it*, are used impersonally, and mean that which results from the action of the verbs.

3. Mighty things—Literally, *things fortified*, that is, inaccessible, hard to be found out. Ewald conjectures, that in the original word one letter, nun, (נ,) has been changed into another, beth, (ב.) If this be true (which is by no means necessary) the reading would be *hidden*.

4. By the mounts, and by the sword—Literally, *against, or on account of*. The houses had been pulled

the sword; **5** 'They come to fight with the Chaldeans, but *it is* to fill them with the dead bodies of men, whom I have slain in mine anger and in my fury, and for all whose wickedness I have hid my face from this city. **6** Behold, **7** I will bring it health and cure, and I will cure them, and will reveal unto them the abundance of peace and truth. **7** And **8** I will cause the captivity of Judah and the captivity of Israel to return, and will build them, ¹ as at the first. **8** And I will ² cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me; and I will ³ pardon all their iniquities, whereby they have sinned, and whereby they have transgressed against me.

9 ⁴ And it shall be to me a name of joy, a praise and an honour before all the nations of the earth, which shall hear all the good that I do unto them: and they shall ⁵ fear and tremble for all the goodness and for all the prosperity that I procure unto it. **10** Thus saith the Lord; Again there shall be heard in this place, ⁶ which ye say *shall be des-*

olate without man and without beast, *even* in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem, that are desolate, without man, and without inhabitant, and without beast. **11** The ⁷ voice of joy, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, the voice of them that shall say, ⁸ Praise the Lord of hosts: for the Lord *is* good; for his mercy *endureth* for ever: and of them that shall bring ⁹ the sacrifice of praise into the house of the Lord. For ¹⁰ I will cause to return the captivity of the land, as at the first, saith the Lord. **12** Thus saith the Lord of hosts; ¹¹ Again in this place, which is desolate without man and without beast, and in all the cities thereof, shall be a habitation of shepherds causing *their* flocks to lie down. **13** ¹² In the cities of the mountains, in the cities of the vale, and in the cities of the south, and in the land of Benjamin, and in the places about Jerusalem, and in the cities of Judah, shall the flocks ¹³ pass again under the hands of him that telleth *them*,

^f Chap. 32. 5.—^g Chap. 30. 17.—^h Chap. 30. 3; 32. 44; verse 11.—ⁱ Isa. 1. 26; chap. 24. 6; 20. 20; 31. 4, 23; 42. 10.—^k Ezek. 36. 25; Zech. 13. 1; Heb. 9. 13, 14.—^l Chap. 31. 34; Micah 7. 18.—^m Isa. 62. 7; chap. 13. 11.—ⁿ Isa. 60. 5.—^o Chap. 32. 43.

^p Chap. 7. 34; 16. 9; 25. 10; Rev. 18. 23.—^q 1 Chron. 16. 8, 34; 2 Chron. 5. 13; 7. 3; Ezra 3. 11; Psa. 136. 1; Isa. 12. 4.—^r Lev. 7. 12; Psa. 107. 22; 116. 17.—^s Ver. 7.—^t Isa. 65. 10; chap. 31. 24; 50. 19.—^u Chap. 17. 26; 32. 44.—^v Lev. 27. 32.

down to strengthen the walls of the city and repair the breaches. **Swords** are here mentioned as being the leading, and so the most representative, weapon of offensive warfare.

5. They come to fight, etc.—This sentence is very enigmatical, and has occasioned many conjectural emendations of the text. But all such violent solutions of difficulties are to be rejected. We may take into thought the *possibility* of textual change, but have no right to postulate such change. The best explanation these puzzling words admit of is, *They (the people) come to fight with the Chaldeans, but (the result is,) to fill the houses with the dead bodies of the slain, etc.*

6. I will bring it health and cure—Literally, *I will apply to it a bandage and healing*, that is, a healing bandage. The language following sets forth the idea more fully: **I will cure them, and will reveal, etc.**

7. Cause...to return—I will reverse it, and restore the old freedom and prosperity.

8. Will cleanse—Transcendent

grace! He not only remits the punishment, but removes the sin.

9. It—The city. Shall fear and tremble—Because of the overwhelming revelation of that God "who doeth his pleasure in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth."

10. In this place—In this land—Judea. **Which ye say shall be desolate**—Rather, *of which ye say it is desolate*.

11. The voice of joy, etc.—The fulness and emphasis of this promise is indicated by the wave after wave of parallelism which flows in upon us. **Praise the Lord, etc.**—This phraseology seems to be quoted here as liturgical; the regular and universal formula of praise and thanksgiving. **As at the first**—I will restore the land to the condition it had before the captivity.

12. Causing their flocks to lie down—A graphic feature of pastoral life, suggesting peace and tranquillity.

13. Under the hands of him that telleth them—That is, who counts

saith the LORD. **14** * Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that * I will perform that good thing which I have promised unto the house of Israel and to the house of Judah.

15 In those days, and at that time, will I cause the ^v Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land. **16** * In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely: and this is the name wherewith she shall be called, ³ The LORD our Righteousness.

17 For thus saith the LORD; ⁴ David shall never ^a want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel: **18** Neither shall the priests the Levites want a man before me to ^b offer burnt offerings, and to kindle meat offerings, and to do sacrifice continually.

19 And the word of the LORD came unto Jeremiah, saying, **20** Thus saith

^v Chap. 23. 5; 31. 27, 31. — ^a Chap. 29. 10. — ^y Isa. 4. 2; 11. 1; chap. 23. 5. — ^z Chap. 23. 6. — ³ Heb. *Jehovah-tsidkenu*. — ⁴ Heb. *There shall not be cut off from David*. — ^a 2 Sam. 7. 16; 1 Kings 2. 4; Ps. 89. 29, 36; Luke 1. 32, 33.

the sheep as they are put out to pasture, and again as they are brought back to the fold.

CHRIST THE BRANCH—THE FULFILMENT OF BOTH THE KINGLY AND THE PRIESTLY IDEAS, 15–18.

15, 16. These verses are substantially a repetition of chap. xxiii, 5, 6, with several changes, most of which, however, are of no real significance. But in one important feature this passage is different. It is here stated that the city shall be called **The Lord our Righteousness**. This suggests the real oneness between the personal life-source, the Messiah, and the channel through which this life flows forth to the nations.

17, 18. **David shall never want a man**—And yet in such passages as chap. xxii, 30, and xxx, 21, the failure of the Davidic kingdom seems to be definitely predicted; and this prediction, as a matter of fact, was exactly fulfilled. No king after Zedekiah, of the Davidic line ever sat upon the throne. The explanation of this apparent incongruity is this: the real reign of David was perpetuated in Christ. His kingdom was a perma-

nent reality. The stream of its life might, for a time, disappear beneath the surface; yet in Christ it would break forth in exhaustless fulness. So, also, of the Levitical priesthood. Its offerings might be interrupted, but these types would be fulfilled in the permanent priesthood of Jesus Christ.

the LORD; * If ye can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, and that there should not be day and night in their season; **21** Then may also ⁴ my covenant be broken with David my servant, that he should not have a son to reign upon his throne; and with the Levites the priests, my ministers. **22** As * the host of heaven cannot be numbered, neither the sand of the sea measured; so will I multiply the seed of David my servant, and the Levites that minister unto me. **23** More-over the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah, saying, **24** Considerest thou not what this people have spoken, saying, 'The two families which the LORD hath chosen, he hath even cast them off? thus they have despised my people, that they should be no more a nation before them. **25** Thus saith the LORD; If ^a my covenant be not with day and night, and if I have not ^b appointed the ordinances of

^b Rom. 12. 1; 15. 16; 1 Pet. 2. 5, 9; Rev. 1. 6. — ^c Ps. 89. 37; Isa. 54. 9; chap. 31. 36; ver. 25. — ^d Ps. 89. 34. — ^e Gen. 13. 16; 15. 5; 22. 17; chap. 31. 27. — ^f Vers. 21, 23. — ^g Ver. 20; Gen. 8. 22. — ^h Ps. 74. 16, 17; 104. 19; chap. 31. 35, 36.

nent reality. The stream of its life might, for a time, disappear beneath the surface; yet in Christ it would break forth in exhaustless fulness. So, also, of the Levitical priesthood. Its offerings might be interrupted, but these types would be fulfilled in the permanent priesthood of Jesus Christ.

GOD'S PERPETUAL COVENANT, 19–26.

20. My covenant of the day, etc.—An appeal to the changeless and irresistible ongoing of nature, the innumerable host of stars, and the immeasurable quantity of the sand, as symbols of the stability and exhaustlessness of the divine resources. The stability of the physical universe leads to the stability of God's higher kingdom; and its wonderful extent and variety suggest the infinite and all-comprehending character of the divine plans.

24. What this people—The Jews. **Two families**—Israel and Judah. **Have despised my people**—In that they have denied them their true and proper character as the covenant people of God.

25. If my covenant be not with day and night—The repetition of

heaven and earth; **26** ^y Then will I cast away the seed of Jacob, and David my servant, so that I will not take *any* of his seed to be rulers over the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: for ^z I will cause their captivity to return, and have mercy on them.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE word which came unto Jeremiah from the Lord, ^a when Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and all his army, and ^b all the kingdoms of the earth ¹ of his dominion, and all the people, fought against Jerusalem, and against all the cities thereof, saying, **2** Thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel; Go and speak to Zedekiah king of Judah, and tell him, Thus saith the Lord; Behold, ^c I will give this city into the hand of the king of Babylon, and ^d he shall burn it with fire: **3** And ^e thou shalt not escape out of his hand, but shalt surely

be taken, and delivered into his hand; and thine eyes shall behold the eyes of the king of Babylon, and ² he shall speak with thee mouth to mouth, and thou shalt go to Babylon. **4** Yet hear the word of the Lord, O Zedekiah king of Judah; Thus saith the Lord of thee, Thou shalt not die by the sword; **5** But thou shalt die in peace: and with ^f the burnings of thy fathers, the former kings which were before thee, ⁶ so shall they burn odours for thee; and ^h they will lament thee, saying, Ah lord! for I have pronounced the word, saith the Lord. **6** Then Jeremiah the prophet spake all these words unto Zedekiah king of Judah in Jerusalem, **7** When the king of Babylon's army fought against Jerusalem, and against all the cities of Judah that were left, against Lachish, and against Azekah: for ⁱ these defended cities remained of the cities of Judah.

^y Chap. 31. 37.—^z Verses 7, 11; Ezra 2. 1.—^a 2 Kings 25. 1. etc.; chap. 39. 1; 52. 4.—^b Chap. 1. 15.—¹ Heb. *the dominion of his hand*.—^c Chap. 21. 10; 32. 3, 28.—^d Chap. 32. 29; ver. 22.

^e Chap. 32. 4.—² Heb. *his mouth shall speak to thy mouth*.—^f See 2 Chron. 16. 14; 21. 19.—^g Dan. 2. 46.—^h See chap. 22. 18.—ⁱ 2 Kings 18. 13; 19. 8; 2 Chron. 11. 5, 9.

this appeal to the established laws of nature shows the warmth and emphasis of the passage.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE MESSAGE TO ZEDEKIAH ANNOUNCING THE FUTILITY OF RESISTANCE, 1-7.

The time when this prophecy was spoken must have been near the beginning of the siege; for—

a. Jeremiah was not in confinement. "Go and speak," verse 2.

b. Lachish and Azekah were not captured, verse 7.

It would seem then that the first seven verses of this chapter cannot be simply a repetition in a more extended form of verses 3-5 of chap. xxxii, but should rather be classed with chap. xxi, and were intended as a warning to King Zedekiah of the fruitlessness of all attempts to drive away the Chaldeans. The very full and formal introduction in verse 1, and the character of the contents, alike favour this view.

1. People—Literally, *peoples*; suggesting the extent of the Chaldean monarchy, and perhaps also the heterogeneousness of the army of Nebuchadnezzar, made up of unassimilated and, perhaps, half conquered tribes.

All the cities thereof—See xix, 15. The towns and villages immediately about Jerusalem. **Fought**—Literally, *are fighting*.

2. Burn it with fire—Suggesting the fierceness and fury of the king of Babylon and the cruelty of oriental warfare.

3. Thou shalt not escape—Many, as, for instance, Hitzig, Graf, and Payne Smith, in the Speaker's Commentary, understand this to express a conditional prophecy. The fate set forth in this and the following verses would be inevitable should he persist in resisting, but otherwise might be averted. But this interpretation is unwarranted and unnecessary.

4. Not die by the sword—Though a captive, yet a king of God's covenant people, and hence distinguished by the care of God for him even in misfortune and defeat. In this he was in contrast with Jehoiakim.

5. Burn (odours) for thee—See 2 Chron. xvi, 14; xxi, 19. Some have understood this to imply an actual burning of the body; but this does not seem to have been customary among the Hebrews.

7. Against Lachish, etc.—Lachish and Azekah were both situated in the south-western part of Judah, on the

8 *This is the word that came unto Jeremiah from the LORD, after that the king Zedekiah had made a covenant with all the people which were at Jerusalem, to proclaim liberty unto them;* 9 *That every man should let his manservant, and every man his maidservant, being a Hebrew or a Hebrewess, go free; that none should serve himself of them, to wit, of a Jew his brother.* 10 Now when all the princes, and all the people, which had entered into the covenant, heard that every one should let his manservant, and every one his maidservant, go free, that none should serve themselves of them any more; then they obeyed, and let them go. 11 But afterwards they turned, and caused the servants and the handmaids, whom they had let go free, to return, and brought them into subjection for servants and for handmaids.

12 Therefore the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, 13 Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel; I made a covenant with your

Exod. 21. 2; Lev. 25. 10; verse 14.—Neh. 5. 11.—m Lev. 25. 39-46.—n See verse 21; chap. 37. 5.—o Exod. 21. 2; 23. 10; Deut. 15. 12.—3 Or, hath sold himself.—4 Heb. to day.

Philistine plain, and were both fortified by Rehoboam. 2 Chron. xi, 9. The siege of Lachish by Sennacherib (2 Kings xviii, 14, 17, *et al*) is supposed by Layard to be depicted on certain slabs disinterred from the ruins of Nineveh. (Cowles.) The general meaning of the passage is that these cities remained; but it is hardly true that the passage requires us to conclude that these alone remained.

JUDGMENTS DENOUNCED AGAINST THE PEOPLE FOR ANNULING THE MANUMISSION OF THEIR SLAVES, 8-22.

8. **Had made a covenant...to proclaim liberty**—By the law, as given in Dent. xv, 12, and Exod. xxi, 2, Hebrews held as bond-servants were to be emancipated after being held in service for six years. It does not seem that this means the sabbatical year, but only *after six years*. Their great danger had, doubtless, quickened their consciences in this matter, and the proper observance of this law was one of the reforms which the king sought to institute. It is possible, too, that slaves were liberated with-

fathers in the day that I brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondmen, saying, 14 At the end of seven years let ye go every man his brother a Hebrew, which hath been sold unto thee; and when he hath served thee six years, thou shalt let him go free from thee: but your fathers hearkened not unto me, neither inclined their ear. 15 And ye were now turned, and had done right in my sight, in proclaiming liberty every man to his neighbour; and ye had made a covenant before me in the house which is called by my name: 16 But ye turned and polluted my name, and caused every man his servant, and every man his handmaid, whom he had set at liberty at their pleasure, to return, and brought them into subjection, to be unto you for servants and for handmaids. 17 Therefore thus saith the LORD; Ye have not hearkened unto me, in proclaiming liberty, every one to his brother, and every man to his neighbour: behold, I proclaim a liberty for you, saith the LORD, to the sword, to

p So 2 Kings 23. 3; Neh. 10. 29.—q Chap. 7. 10.—5 Heb. whereupon my name is called.—r Exod. 20. 7; Lev. 19. 12.—s Matt. 7. 2; Gal. 6. 7; James 2. 13.—t Chap. 32. 24, 36.

out reference to the time of their servitude.

11. **But afterwards**, etc.—This reformation in the presence of impending danger, was no more genuine than deathbed repentances frequently are. So soon as the danger seemed overpast the wrong was resumed. The idiom in this verse is mistaken in the Authorized Version. Instead of **turned, and caused...to return**, the true translation should be, *they again caused them to return*.

13. **Egypt...the house of bondmen**—This law was more sacred because of their own history. The whole people had been slaves and had been set at liberty by God's gracious interference; it would then be peculiarly wicked and ungrateful if they held their brethren in perpetual bondage.

14. **Seven years**—At the close of six years the bondage of a Hebrew ceased. See Dent. xv, 12.

17. **I proclaim a liberty for you**—I will punish you according to your offence. I will set you free from my care and guidance—will manumit you

the pestilence, and to the famine; and I will make you ^ato be "removed into all the kingdoms of the earth. 18 And I will give the men that have transgressed my covenant, which have not performed the words of the covenant which they had made before me, when ^athey cut the calf in twain, and passed between the parts thereof, 19 The princes of Judah, and the princes of Jerusalem, the eunuchs, and the priests, and all the people of the land, which passed between the parts of the calf; 20 I will even give them into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of them that seek their life: and their ^pdead bodies shall be for meat unto the fowls of the heaven, and to the beasts of the earth. 21 And Zedekiah king of Judah and his princes will I give into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of them that seek their life, and into the hand of the king of Babylon's army, ^awhich are gone up from you. 22 ^rBehold, I will

⁶ Heb. *for a removing*. — ⁿ Deut. 28. 25, 64; chap. 29. 18. — ^o See Gen. 15. 10, 17. — ^p Chap. 7. 33; 16. 4; 19. 7. — ^q See chap. 37. 5, 11.

from my safe and happy service—will substitute a liberty to calamity and death for a service of prosperity and life. **Make you to be removed, etc.** — *Make you to be a dread unto.* Others translate, *make you an agitation.* Keil, *make you a tossing hither and thither.* According to these last there is here predicted the condition of unrest in which the Jewish people have been.

18. Passed between the parts thereof—The construction of the latter part of this verse is difficult. The following are the two leading constructions proposed. *I will make the men like the calf which they cut in two.* (Keil.) *The words of the covenant . . . even of the calf, etc.* (Ewald, Smith, *et al.*) In the former the men are identified with or likened to the calf; in the latter, the calf and the covenant are used as synonymes. The last gives the most satisfactory sense, but the Hebrew construction with difficulty admits of it. The contracting parties passed between the parts of the animal cut in two, implying an imprecation upon themselves, so to be cut in sunder should they fail to keep the covenant. In the New Testament "cut him asunder" (Matt. xxiv, 51) may possibly retain a shadow of this

command, saith the LORD, and cause them to return to this city; and they shall fight against it, ^aand take it, and burn it with fire: and ⁱI will make the cities of Judah a desolation without an inhabitant.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE word which came unto Jeremiah from the LORD, in the days of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, saying, 2 Go unto the house of the ^aRechabites, and speak unto them, and bring them into the house of the LORD, into one of ^bthe chambers, and give them wine to drink. 3 Then I took Jaazaniah the son of Jeremiah, the son of Habaziah, and his brethren, and all his sons, and the whole house of the Rechabites; 4 And I brought them into the house of the LORD, into the chamber of the sons of Hanan, the son of Igdaliah, a man of God, which *was* by the chamber of the princes, which *was* above the chamber of Maaseiah the son

^r Chap. 37. 8, 10. — ^s Chap. 38. 3; 39. 1, 2, 8; 52. 7, 13. — ^t Chap. 9. 11; 44. 2, 6. — ^a 2 Kings 10. 15; 1 Chron. 2. 55. — ^b 1 Kings 6. 5.

meaning. We find God himself conforming to this usage in Gen. xv, 9, etc.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE HISTORY OF THE RECHABITES
A COUNTERPART OF THAT OF ISRAEL,
1-11.

2. House of the Rechabites—Their family. By the example of their obedience Jeremiah condemned the disobedience of the Jews. **Bring them into the house of the Lord, etc.**—First that the test might be a public one, and so the result known: and second, possibly because there may have been in this an implied censure of the loose ways of the priests, who made the chambers of the temple scenes of conviviality.

3. Jaazaniah—Probably the elder and chief of the tribe.

4. The sons of Hanan were probably not his children, but his followers, and so we seem to have suggested a religious sect, though of their principles and history we know nothing.

A man of God—This appellation belongs probably to Hanan, and not to Igdaliah, this being the usual mode of construing this Hebrew idiom. **Chamber of the princes**—Probably an office or council-room where public

of Shallum, ^cthe keeper of the ¹door: **5** And I set before the sons of the house of the Rechabites pots full of wine, and cups; and I said unto them, Drink ye wine. **6** But they said, We will drink no wine: for ^aJonadab the son of Rechab our father commanded us, saying, Ye shall drink no wine, *neither* ye, nor your sons for ever: **7** Neither shall ye build house, nor sow seed, nor plant vineyard, nor have *any*: but all your days ye shall dwell in tents; ^ethat ye may live many days in the land where ye *be* strangers. **8** Thus have we obeyed the voice of Jonadab the son of Rechab our father in all that he hath charged us, to drink no wine all our days, we, our wives, our sons, nor our daughters; **9** Nor to build houses for us to dwell in; neither have we vineyard, nor field, nor seed: **10** But we have dwelt in tents, and have obeyed, and done according to all that Jonadab our father commanded us. **11** But it came to pass, when Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon came up into the land, that we said, Come, and let us go to Jerusalem for fear of the army of the Chaldeans, and for fear of the army of the Syrians: so we dwell at Jerusalem.

12 Then came the word of the Lord unto Jeremiah, saying, **13** Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Go and tell the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, Will ye not ^freceive instruction to hearken to my

words? saith the Lord. **14** The words of Jonadab the son of Rechab, that he commanded his sons not to drink wine, are performed; for unto this day they drink none, but obey their father's commandment: ^gnotwithstanding I have spoken unto you, ^hrising early and speaking; but ye hearkened not unto me. **15** ⁱI have sent also unto you all my servants the prophets, rising up early and sending *them*, saying, ^jReturn ye now every man from his evil way, and amend your doings, and go not after other gods to serve them, and ye shall dwell in the land which I have given to you and to your fathers: but ye have not inclined your ear, nor hearkened unto me. **16** Because the sons of Jonadab the son of Rechab have performed the commandment of their father, which he commanded them; but this people hath not hearkened unto me: **17** Therefore thus saith the Lord God of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will bring upon Judah and upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem all the evil that I have pronounced against them: ^kbecause I have spoken unto them, but they have not heard; and I have called unto them, but they have not answered.

18 And Jeremiah said unto the house of the Rechabites, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Because ye have obeyed the commandment of Jonadab your father, and kept all his precepts, and done according unto all that

^c 2 Kings 12. 9; 25. 18; 1 Chron. 9. 18, 19.—¹ Heb. *threshold*, or, *vestel*.—^d 2 Kings 10. 15.—^e Exod. 20. 12; Eph. 6. 2, 3.—^f Chap. 32. 33.

^g 2 Chron. 36. 15.—^h Chap. 7. 13; 25. 3.—ⁱ Chap. 7. 25; 25. 4.—^k Chap. 18. 11; 25. 5, 6.—^l Prov. 1. 24; Isa. 65. 12; 66. 4; chap. 7. 13.

business was attended to. Chap. xxvi, 10, seems to belong with this verse. **Keeper of the door**—Literally, *of the threshold*; as Keil suggests, "overseer of the watchmen of the temple gates," of which, according to chap. lii, 24, and 2 Kings xxv, 18, there were three, who are there mentioned along with the high priest and his substitute. Maaseiah is probably the same whose son Zephaniah was "priest of the repetition," or second priest. Chap. lii, 24.

5. Pots—Bowls or large goblets, out of which the drinking cups were filled.

6, 7. Drink no wine—It will here be noticed that wine is intimately associated with settled life as opposed to a nomadic one. It is the fruit of culture—*agri*-culture—while the drink of the nomad is milk. The object of

this rule of life would seem to be twofold. 1. To preserve their individuality; and 2. To preserve their purity.

11. Army of the Syrians—In the earlier times the Syrians were their great danger; and even now the greater army of the Chaldeans included the lesser of the Syrians.

THE APPLICATION OF THE RECHABITES' EXAMPLE, 12-19.

14. The words of Jonadab...are performed;...but ye hearkened not unto me—Here is the plain application of this historical lesson. The Rechabites kept the commands of their father, and as a consequence have been rewarded. Ye violate the commands of your Father and will be punished. What could more thoroughly shame their unfaithfulness?

he hath commanded you; **19** Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; ²Jonadab the son of Rechab shall not want a man to ^mstand before me for ever.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

AND it came to pass in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, *that* this word came unto Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, **2** Take thee a ^aroll of a book, and ⁿwrite therein all the words that I have spoken unto thee against Israel, and

² Heb. *There shall not a man be cut off from Jonadab the son of Rechab to stand, etc.*—^m Chapter 15. 19.—^a Isa. 8. 1; Ezekiel 2. 9; Zechariah 5. 1.

19. Shall not want a man to stand before me, etc.—The phrase “stand before me” may be technical and liturgical, as a writer in Smith’s Dictionary suggests, and this may have been fulfilled in that the Rechabites became in some way incorporated into the tribe of Levi. (See the title of *Psa. lxxii*, in the Septuagint: “To David of the sons of Jonadab, and the first who were taken captive.”) A son of Rechab is mentioned in *Neh. iii, 14*, in connexion with priests and Levites. But the better explanation is, that it means simply divine care. Existence and service are suggested, but not necessarily sacerdotal service.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Up to this point we have a collection of Jeremiah’s prophecies concerning Judah and Jerusalem, with some related historical incidents. The following nine chapters are made up of historical material which is arranged to make a continuous narrative. The first three chapters embrace events before the capture of Jerusalem, and the last six events after the capture. In this chapter we have,

THE COMMAND, FIRST WRITING, AND PUBLIC READING, 1–8.

1. Fourth year of Jehoiakim—This is also the date of chapter xxv. (See xxv, 1.) But probably the twenty-fifth chapter belongs in the begin-

ning of this year, while this chapter should fall near its close. For the reading “in the ears of the people,” did not take place until the ninth month of the following year. (See verse 9.) From the first verse of Daniel we learn that the capture of Jerusalem took place in the fourth year of Jehoiakim. It is not unlikely that this event falls between the two chapters above mentioned.

^b Chapter 30. 2. — ^c Chapter 25. 15, etc. — ^d Chapter 25. 3. — ^e Verse 7; chapter 26. 3. — ^f Chapter 13. 8; Jonah 3. 8. — ^g Chapter 32. 12. — ^h See chapter 45. 1.

ning of this year, while this chapter should fall near its close. For the reading “in the ears of the people,” did not take place until the ninth month of the following year. (See verse 9.) From the first verse of Daniel we learn that the capture of Jerusalem took place in the fourth year of Jehoiakim. It is not unlikely that this event falls between the two chapters above mentioned.

2. A roll of a book—A book-roll; that is, a roll properly prepared for writing. **And write—**Not copy as if into one volume what already existed in a written form but detached, but *reduce to writing* the things which had, from time to time, been spoken. There is nothing in the form of language, either excluding or including written aids to the memory, in doing this work. The purpose of this writing, as shown in verse 3, was to influence the people by means of it. A writing is something more staid and impressive than the fleeting utterances of oral discourse can be.

4. Wrote from the mouth of Jeremiah—That is, at his dictation. The writing was done under his supervision; but, as stated above, there is no conclusive reason why the scribe might not avail himself in making his record of any earlier ones if they existed. This matter of writing would seem to have been the most honourable of employments. Hence in this case the scribe is Baruch, a memoir of a noble family.

saying, *I am* shut up; I cannot go into the house of the LORD: **6** Therefore go thou, and read in the roll, which thou hast written from my mouth, the words of the LORD in the ears of the people in the LORD's house upon¹ the fasting day: and also thou shalt read them in the ears of all Judah that come out of their cities. **7** *It may be¹ they will present their supplication before the LORD, and will return every one from his evil way: for great is the anger and the fury that the LORD hath pronounced against this people. **8** And Baruch the son of Neriah did according to all that Jeremiah the prophet commanded him, reading in the book the words of the LORD in the LORD's house. **9** And it came to pass in the fifth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, in the ninth month, *that* they proclaimed a fast before the LORD to all the people in Jerusalem, and to all the people that came from the cities of Judah unto Jerusalem. **10** Then read Baruch in the book the words of Jeremiah in the house of the LORD, in the chamber of Gemariah the son of Shaphan the scribe, in the higher court, at the² entry of the new gate of

the LORD's house, in the ears of all the people.

11 When Michaiah the son of Gemariah, the son of Shaphan, had heard out of the book all the words of the LORD, **12** Then he went down into the king's house, into the scribe's chamber: and, lo, all the princes sat there, *even* Elishama the scribe, and Delaiah the son of Shemaiah, and Elnathan the son of Achbor, and Gemariah the son of Shaphan, and Zedekiah the son of Hananiah, and all the princes. **13** Then Michaiah declared unto them all the words that he had heard, when Baruch read the book in the ears of the people. **14** Therefore all the princes sent Jehudi the son of Nethaniah, the son of Shelemiah, the son of Cushi, unto Baruch, saying, Take in thine hand the roll wherein thou hast read in the ears of the people, and come. So Baruch the son of Neriah took the roll in his hand, and came unto them. **15** And they said unto him, Sit down now, and read it in our ears. So Baruch read *it* in their ears. **16** Now it came to pass, when they had heard all the words, they were afraid both one and other,

¹ Leviticus 16. 29; 23. 27-32; Acts 27. 9. — ² Verse 3.

¹ *Their supplication shall fall.* — 2 Or, door. — ² Chap. 26. 10.

5. Shut up — Rather, *hindered*. There is no proof that Jeremiah was in custody at this time.

6. The fasting day — The fast day mentioned in verse 9 is here intended. This was not a stated, but an extraordinary, fast. It would be a favourable time in which to read the book, because a day of holy convocation and because a day of solemnity and humiliation.

7. They will present their supplication — The original is more beautiful — *their supplication shall fall*; alluding to the prostrate attitude of the supplicants.

PARTICULARS OF THE READING, 9-18.

9. In the ninth month . . . proclaimed a fast — This would fall about December. The ordinary fast was in the seventh month. Keil conjectures that this was a fast appointed in view of the capture of Jerusalem in the previous year.

10. In the chamber of Gemariah — Probably from the window or balcony. **Higher court** — That of the

priests; the court of the people being lower. "The chamber," then, would seem to be between the two courts.

12. The scribe's chamber — A public office where the king's decrees were formulated and recorded; as has properly been suggested, the office of the secretary of state. The presence of **all the princes** may indicate the critical condition of public affairs.

14. Take . . . the roll . . . and come — Had these **princes** been where they perhaps should have been, they would have heard the reading at the first. The man who is in the congregation of God's worshippers is in the way of the best things; the man who is not there is without the circle of God's choicest blessings.

15. Sit down — A token of respect. This attention probably intimates the favour with which the "princes" regarded both Baruch and Jeremiah.

16. They were afraid — Literally, *they trembled each to his fellow*. They showed the alarm with which these words filled their minds. This was due, not to the novelty of the predic-

and said unto Baruch, We will surely tell the king of all these words. **17** And they asked Baruch, saying, Tell us now, How didst thou write all these words at his mouth? **18** Then Baruch answered them, He pronounced all these words unto me with his mouth, and I wrote *them* with ink in the book. **19** Then said the princes unto Baruch, Go, hide thee, thou and Jeremiah; and let no man know where ye be.

20 And they went in to the king into the court, but they laid up the roll in the chamber of Elishama the scribe, and told all the words in the ears of the king. **21** So the king sent Jehudi to fetch the roll; and he took it out of Elishama the scribe's chamber. And Jehudi read it in the ears of the king, and in the ears of all the princes which stood beside the king. **22** Now the king sat in ^{the} winter house in the ninth month: and *there was a fire* on the hearth burning before him. **23** And it came to pass, *that* when Jehudi had read three or four leaves, he cut it with the penknife, and cast it into the fire that *was* on the hearth, until all the roll was consumed in the fire that *was*

on the hearth. **24** Yet they were not afraid, nor ^{rent} their garments, *neither* the king, nor any of his servants that heard all these words. **25** Nevertheless Elnathan and Delaiah and Gemariah had made intercession to the king that he would not burn the roll; but he would not hear them. **26** But the king commanded Jerahmeel the son ^{of} Hammelech, and Seraiah the son of Azriel, and Shelemiah the son of Abdeel, to take Baruch the scribe and Jeremiah the prophet: but the LORD hid them.

27 Then the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah, after that the king had burned the roll, and the words which Baruch wrote at the mouth of Jeremiah, saying, **28** Take thee again another roll, and write in it all the former words that were in the first roll, which Jehoiakim the king of Judah hath burned. **29** And thou shalt say to Jehoiakim king of Judah, Thus saith the LORD; Thou hast burned this roll, saying, Why hast thou written therein, saying, The king of Babylon shall certainly come and destroy this land, and shall cause to cease from thence man and beast? **30** Therefore thus saith the LORD of

m See Amos 3. 15.—*n* 2 Kings 22. 11 :

Isa. 36. 22; 37. 1.—3 Or, *of the king.*

tions, as with many of them they must have been acquainted, but to the solemnity of the occasion, the gravity of the subject-matter, the earnestness of the scribe himself, and the cumulative force of the predictions. **We will surely tell**—Rather, *we must tell*. These matters, so important, we may not hide from the king.

17. How didst thou write—Two points seem to be involved in this question, which is not one of mere curiosity, but of earnest interest: namely, authority and accuracy. As to both the answer was most conclusive.

THE READING TO THE KING, 19-26.

22. Winter house—A special part of the palace used for that season. **Fire on the hearth**—*Brazier*. The houses of the Jews, as usual in the east, were warmed not by means of chimneys or living fires, but by open vessels containing coals.

23. Three or four leaves—Rather, *columns*. The exact word here is *doors*. This was a continuous roll, but the

writing, as is customary, was in sections or columns. **Cut it**, etc.—That is, the king, not **Jehudi**, “cut it.” The act illustrates the violence of the king's temper. The book had made a deep impression on the princes, and they were careful to provide for its safe keeping when they sent to tell the king, but he incontinently destroys it. It is manifestly an error to interpret, as some do, that as often as three or four columns were read they were cast on the brazier, and that this process was kept up until the entire roll was read through and burned up, as this would be silly and incredible.

24. Were not afraid—A contrast with the emotion of the princes, verse 16.

25. Made intercession . . . not burn the roll—The insane rage of the king is brought out into a stronger light by the counter requests of the scribes.

26. The Lord hid them—See Psalm xxxi, 20; lxxxiii, 3; Isaiah xxvi, 20.

Jehoiakim king of Judah; °He shall have none to sit upon the throne of David; and his dead body shall be °cast out in the day to the heat, and in the night to the frost. **31** And I will °punish him and his seed and his servants for their iniquity; and I will bring upon them, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and upon the men of Judah, all the evil that I have pronounced against them; but they hearkened not.

32 Then took Jeremiah another roll, and gave it to Baruch the scribe, the son of Neriah; who wrote therein from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the book which Jehoiakim king of Judah had burned in the fire: and there were added besides unto them many °like words.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

AND king °a Zedekiah the son of Josiah reigned instead of Coniah the son of Jehoiakim, whom Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon made king in the land of Judah. **2** °b But neither he, nor his servants, nor the people of the land,

o Chap. 22, 30. — p Chap. 22, 19. — 4 Heb. visit upon, chap. 23, 34. — 5 Heb. as they. — a 2 Kings 24, 17; 2 Chron. 36, 10; chap. 22, 24. — b 2 Chron. 36, 12, 14.

PUNISHMENT DENOUNCED AGAINST JEHOIAKIM, 27-32.

30. None to sit—The three months' reign of Jeconiah was too trivial and insignificant to be counted. **His dead body shall be cast . . . day to the heat, . . . night to the frost**—These are individualizing expressions, and add solemnity and graphic force.

32. Were added . . . like words—Implying that the first record by no means contained every thing which Jeremiah had said as a prophet, but only such things as were especially suited to the uses of this time. The second record received additions, but we are not warranted in concluding that even this was complete.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

The time of this and the following two chapters is fixed by Keil as that of the siege of Jerusalem.

JEREMIAH'S PERSONAL EXPERIENCES WITH THE KING, 1-10.

1. Coniah — Jeconiah. **Whom Nebuchadrezzar . . . made king**—"Whom," that is, Zedekiah.

did hearken unto the words of the LORD, which he spake ° by the prophet Jeremiah. **3** And Zedekiah the king sent Jehucal the son of Shelemiah and ° Zepaniah the son of Maaseiah the priest to the prophet Jeremiah, saying, Pray now unto the LORD our God for us. **4** Now Jeremiah came in and went out among the people: for they had not put him into prison. **5** Then ° Pharaoh's army was come forth out of Egypt: ° and when the Chaldeans that besieged Jerusalem heard tidings of them, they departed from Jerusalem.

6 Then came the word of the LORD unto the prophet Jeremiah, saying, **7** Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel; Thus shall ye say to the king of Judah, ° that sent you unto me to inquire of me; Behold, Pharaoh's army, which is come forth to help you, shall return to Egypt into their own land. **8** ° And the Chaldeans shall come again, and fight against this city, and take it, and burn it with fire. **9** Thus saith the LORD; Deceive not ° yourselves, saying,

1 Heb. by the hand of the prophet. — c Chap. 21, 1; 29, 25; 52, 24. — d See 2 Kings 24, 7; Ezek. 17, 15. — e Ver. 11; chap. 34, 21. — f Chap. 21, 2. — g Chap. 34, 22. — 2 Heb. souls.

2. Neither he, nor . . . did hearken—"Amazing stupidity that they were not warned by the punishment of Jeconiah." (Calvin.)

3. Zedekiah . . . sent—This is not the same incident that is given in chap. xxi, 9. That took place when the Chaldeans were first approaching Jerusalem—this in the interval of hope produced by the approach of the Egyptian army to raise the siege. But this was before Jeremiah was imprisoned.

5. Pharaoh's army — Pharaoh Hophra. He reigned twenty-five years, and was then dethroned by Amasis. According to Nägelsbach, this was the first or second year of his reign, and seventeen years after the battle of Carchemish. **They departed**—Whether he was defeated or withdrew without giving battle we do not know. The language suggests the latter.

6-10. Chaldeans shall . . . burn it—The one thing noticeable about this passage is its terrible earnestness and minuteness. Jeremiah assures Judah that the Egyptians shall return to

The Chaldeans shall surely depart from us: for they shall not depart. **10** ^b For though ye had smitten the whole army of the Chaldeans that fight against you, and there remained *but* ^a wounded men among them, *yet* should they rise up every man in his tent, and burn this city with fire.

11 ¹ And it came to pass, that when the army of the Chaldeans was ² broken up from Jerusalem for fear of Pharaoh's army, **12** Then Jeremiah went forth out of Jerusalem to go into the land of Benjamin, ³ to separate himself thence in the midst of the people. **13** And when he was in the gate of Benjamin, a captain of the ward *was* there, whose name *was* Irijah, the son of Shelemiah, the son of Hananiah; and he took Jeremiah the prophet, saying, Thou fallest away to the Chaldeans. **14** Then said

Jeremiah, *It is* ^a false: I fall not away to the Chaldeans. But he hearkened not to him: so Irijah took Jeremiah, and brought him to the princes. **15** Wherefore the princes were wroth with Jeremiah, and smote him, ^a and put him in prison in the house of Jonathan the scribe; for they had made that the prison.

16 When Jeremiah was entered into ¹ the dungeon, and into the ² cabins, and Jeremiah had remained there many days; **17** Then Zedekiah the king sent, and took him out; and the king asked him secretly in his house, and said, Is there *any* word from the LORD? And Jeremiah said, There is: for, said he, thou shalt be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon. **18** Moreover Jeremiah said unto king Zedekiah, What have I offended against thee, or against

^a Chapter 21. 4, 5. — ³ Heb. *thrust through*.
— ^b Verse 5. — ¹ Hebrew, *made to ascend*.
— ² Or, *to slip away from thence in the*

midst of the people. — ⁶ Hebrew, *falsehood*, or, *a lie*. — ^h Chapter 38. 26. — ⁱ Chapter 38. 6.
— ⁷ Or, *cells*.

their own land and the Chaldeans to their siege, and that no possible reverse that can come to the Chaldeans will save the city from its impending fate. Even though the whole army were defeated, and there remained only the wounded who had been pierced through and through, (for this is the force of the term translated **wounded**,) still they would rise up and "burn" the city.

JEREMIAH'S IMPRISONMENT, 11-15.

11. Broken up—Rather, simply *gone up*.

12. To separate himself—Neither this nor the translation, *to slip away*, which stands in the margin, is correct. The better approved sense is, *to receive a portion thence*. The Vulgate, Chaldee, and Syriac Versions agree in translating, *to receive an inheritance*, and the Septuagint, *to purchase thence*, but the more exact sense is as above. The probable meaning is, that Jeremiah had gone back to the fields in which he had an interest to obtain the much needed supplies of food.

13. Gate of Benjamin—The north gate of the city, called also the *gate of Ephraim*; as in 2 Kings xiv, 13. **Captain of the ward**—Literally, *lord of the oversight*, the commander of the watch at the gate. **Fallest away to**

the Chaldeans—The charge was probably the offspring of personal malice, but the known views of Jeremiah gave colour to it.

14. The princes—These were not the men who had twice before espoused the cause of Jeremiah. Chaps. xxvi and xxxvi. Probably those had been carried away with Jeconiah, and their places were now filled by men less worthy.

15. Put him in prison—As appears more clearly from the following verse, this was a subterranean prison having its wards or vaults. Its relation to the **house of Jonathan the scribe** indicates that he was an executive or police officer.

JEREMIAH'S INTERVIEW WITH THE KING, 16-21.

16. Cabins—Vaults. The mention of them indicates that Jeremiah's imprisonment began with the extreme rigour of cruelty. The word is found nowhere else.

17. Secretly in his house—The "many days" of the preceding verse had passed, and probably the king of Babylon had been urging his siege. Zedekiah, now in alarm, sends to consult the prophet, but "secretly," through fear of the princes and court ministers.

thy servants, or against this people, that ye have put me in prison? **19** Where are now your prophets which prophesied unto you, saying, The king of Babylon shall not come against you, nor against this land? **20** Therefore hear now, I pray thee, O my lord the king: ^alet my supplication, I pray thee, be accepted before thee; that thou cause me not to return to the house of Jonathan the scribe, lest I die there. **21** Then Zedekiah the king commanded that they should commit Jeremiah ^m into the court of the prison, and that they should give him daily a piece of bread out of the bakers' street, ⁿ until all the bread in the city were spent. Thus Jeremiah remained in the court of the prison.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THEN Shephatiah the son of Mattan, and Gedaliah the son of Pashur, and ^aJucal the son of Shelemiah, and ^bPashur the son of Malchiah, ^cheard

⁸ Heb. *let my supplication fall.*—*m* Chap. 32. 2; 38. 13, 28.—*n* Chap. 38. 9; 52. 6.—*a* Chap. 37. 3.—*b* Chap. 21. 1.—*c* Chap. 21. 8.

17-21. The bearing of Jeremiah in the presence of the king is a model of honesty, dignity, and simplicity. He plainly reaffirms the offensive message without softening it in the least. He then remonstrates with the king because of his treatment, and calls his attention to the fact that others had prophesied falsely in this matter. If, then, any should be punished severely, surely it should not be he who had timely told the truth. This frank appeal was successful, and the king gave command to soften the rigours of his imprisonment. **Piece of bread**—Rather, *waf of bread*. **Bakers' street**—Suggesting that in Jerusalem, as is common in modern oriental towns, the different occupations or trades had come to have their respective quarters. **Court of the prison**—See xxxii, 2.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE COMPLAINT OF THE PRINCES, 1-5.

Jeremiah's imprisonment at the first was doubtless the fruit of personal malice. He had become offensive, and the object was to get him out of the way. But the change made by the king's taking him out of the vaults and allowing him the liberty of the

the words that Jeremiah had spoken unto all the people, saying, **2** Thus saith the LORD, ^aHe that remaineth in this city shall die by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence: but he that goeth forth to the Chaldeans shall live; for he shall have his life for a prey, and shall live. ^b Thus saith the LORD, ^cThis city shall surely be given into the hand of the king of Babylon's army, which shall take it. **4** Therefore the princes said unto the king, We beseech thee, ^dlet this man be put to death: for thus he weakeneth the hands of the men of war that remain in this city, and the hands of all the people, in speaking such words unto them: for this man seeketh not the ^ewelfare of this people, but the hurt. **5** Then Zedekiah the king said, Behold, he is in your hand: for the king is not he that can do any thing against you. **6** ^fThen took they Jeremiah, and cast him into the dungeon of Malchiah the son ^gof Hamme-

^d Chap. 21. 9.—^e Chap. 21. 10; 32. 3.—^f See chap. 26. 11.—¹ Heb. *peace*.—^g Chap. 37. 21.—² Or, *of the king*.

prison court, restored him to intercourse with his friends and contact with the people. Hence a new effort is made to get rid of both the presence and influence of this prophet and his offensive messages.

1. Had spoken—The original is less restricted, *was speaking*. The present participle here implies that Jeremiah continued to speak thus.

4. He weakeneth the hands—True, but there was no treason in his heart, and so the charge that he **seeketh not the welfare of this people, but the hurt**, was not true.

5. For the king, etc.—The exact construction of the original is doubtful and disputed. But following the Masoretic text, we must translate, *The king cannot as to you a word*, (or matter;) that is, the king cannot overbear you in any matter. It is a confession of imbecility, indeed, but also suggests a real dislike of Jeremiah.

JEREMIAH'S CLOSER CONFINEMENT AND RELEASE, 6-13.

6. Dungeon—Literally, as above, *cistern*. As every house was supplied with these they easily served as ready-made prisons. In a cistern like to these, in the field or pasture, Joseph

leah, that *was* in the court of the prison: and they let down Jeremiah with cords. And in the dungeon *there was* no water, but mire: so Jeremiah sunk in the mire.

7 ^a Now when Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, one of the eunuchs which was in the king's house, heard that they had put Jeremiah in the dungeon; the king then sitting in the gate of Benjamin; **8** Ebed-melech went forth out of the king's house, and spake to the king, saying, **9** My lord the king, these men have done evil in all that they have done to Jeremiah the prophet, whom they have cast into the dungeon; and ^b he is like to die for hunger in the place where he is: for *there is* no more bread in the city. **10** Then the king commanded Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, saying, Take from hence thirty men

^a Chap. 39. 16. — ³ Heb. *he will die*. — ⁴ Heb. *in thine hand*.

was placed by his brethren at Dothan. This explains the allusion in Zech. ix, 11, "prisoners out of the pit in which is no water." Hence also the use of cords to let down Jeremiah into the prison.

7. Ebed-melech the Ethiopian—The import of the name is "servant of the king." In 2 Kings xxiii, 11, another eunuch is called Nathan-melech—"gift of the king." From such examples it would seem not improbable that it was not unusual for slaves to take their names from their masters. He was an Ethiopian, and so it was given to an Ethiopian to be a saviour of the prophet. As he is mentioned, we cannot but think of another Ethiopian, also a eunuch, who became the messenger of salvation to his own country, as related in Acts viii.

9. Is like to die—Literally, *he is dead upon the spot for hunger*. This is the language of intensity and alarm. It is hence the language of the feelings, and not merely of the intellect.

10. Thirty men—This great number has been a difficulty to many, and such bold and free critics as Ewald have conjectured an emendation of the text, substituting *three* for *thirty*. They support this by the fact that the word for "men" is plural in the original, whereas the ordinary Hebrew usage is to use the singular form of the noun

with thee, and take up Jeremiah the prophet out of the dungeon, before he die. **11** So Ebed-melech took the men with him, and went into the house of the king under the treasury, and took thence old cast clouts and old rotten rags, and let them down by cords into the dungeon to Jeremiah. **12** And Ebed-melech the Ethiopian said unto Jeremiah, Put now *these* old cast clouts and rotten rags under thine armholes under the cords. And Jeremiah did so. **13** ⁱ So they drew up Jeremiah with cords, and took him up out of the dungeon: and Jeremiah remained ^k in the court of the prison.

14 Then Zedekiah the king sent, and took Jeremiah the prophet unto him into the ^l third entry that *is* in the house of the LORD: and the king said unto

ⁱ Verse 6. — ^k Chapter 37. 21. — ⁵ Or, *principal*.

with all numerals above ten. But, *a*) This rule of Hebrew syntax, though general, is not invariable. There are many instances in which, *when the numeral precedes*, the plural form of the noun is used. *b*) And we know too little to object to the number thirty. They were not necessarily fighting men, nor does it follow that so many were actually needed to execute the order; but so many were given to make sure of the execution of the order.

11. Old cast clouts and old rotten rags—The same word is used for "clouts" and "rags." Hence the better translation would be, *rags of torn garments and rags of wornout garments*. This shows the practical sagacity as well as the kindness of the eunuch.

12. Thine armholes—Literally, *the joints of thy hands*. The same word is used in Ezekiel xiii, 18. Here the meaning is manifestly "armholes," and from this we may come to the true sense in Ezek. xiii, 18.

JEREMIAH'S SUBSEQUENT CONFERENCE WITH THE KING, 14-28.

14. Then Zedekiah, etc.—The imbecile and helpless king oscillated betwixt the prophet and the princes. The overshadowing peril and his own sense of helplessness forbade him to be at rest. **Third entry**—Nothing is known of this passage way, but Keil

Jeremiah, I will ask thee a thing; hide nothing from me. **15** Then Jeremiah said unto Zedekiah, If I declare *it* unto thee, wilt thou not surely put me to death? and if I give thee counsel, wilt thou not hearken unto me? **16** So Zedekiah the king sware secretly unto Jeremiah, saying, *As* the LORD liveth, ¹that made us this soul, I will not put thee to death, neither will I give thee into the hand of these men that seek thy life. **17** Then said Jeremiah unto Zedekiah, Thus saith the LORD, the God of hosts, the God of Israel; If thou wilt assuredly ²go forth ³unto the king of Babylon's princes, then thy soul shall live, and this city shall not be burned with fire; and thou shalt live, and thine house: **18** But if thou wilt not go forth to the king of Babylon's princes, then shall this city be given into the hand of the Chaldeans, and they shall burn it with fire, and ⁴thou shalt not escape out of their hand. **19** And Zedekiah the king said unto Jeremiah, I am afraid of the Jews that are fallen to the Chaldeans, lest they deliver me into their hand, and they ⁵mock me. **20** But Jeremiah said, They shall not deliver thee. Obey, I beseech thee, the voice

of the LORD, which I speak unto thee: so it shall be well unto thee, and thy soul shall live. **21** But if thou refuse to go forth, *this is* the word that the LORD hath shewed me: **22** And, behold, all the women that are left in the king of Judah's house *shall* be brought forth to the king of Babylon's princes, and those *women* shall say, ⁶Thy friends have set thee on, and have prevailed against thee: thy feet are sunk in the mire, and they are turned away back. **23** So they shall bring out all thy wives and ⁷thy children to the Chaldeans: and ⁸thou shalt not escape out of their hand, but shalt be taken by the hand of the king of Babylon: and ⁹thou shalt cause this city to be burned with fire.

24 Then said Zedekiah unto Jeremiah, Let no man know of these words, and thou shalt not die. **25** But if the princes hear that I have talked with thee, and they come unto thee, and say unto thee, Declare unto us now what thou hast said unto the king, hide it not from us, and we will not put thee to death; also what the king said unto thee: **26** Then thou shalt say unto them, ¹⁰I presented my supplication before the king, that he would not cause me to

¹ Isa. 57. 16. — ² 2 Kings 24. 12. — ³ Chap. 39. 3. — ⁴ Chap. 32. 4; 34. 3; verse 23. — ⁵ 1 Sam. 31. 4.

⁶ Heb. *Men of thy peace.* — ⁷ Chap. 39. 6; 41. 10. — ⁸ Verse 18. — ⁹ Heb. *thou shalt burn,* etc. — ¹⁰ Chap. 37. 20.

and others conjecture that it may have been an enclosed space leading from the palace to the temple. Hence it might be a convenient place for a private interview.

15. Wilt thou not hearken—The English is wrong in giving the last sentence as a question. The true reading is, *thou wilt not hearken unto me.*

16. That made us this soul—An unusual addition to the formula of an oath.

17. King of Babylon's princes—This language suggests that the king may not himself have been present with the army at this time. As intimated in chap. xxxix, 5, and 2 Kings xxv, 6, he was probably at this time at Riblah, and hence we have here a minute and apparently altogether undesigned coincidence, but one which stamps on the whole the image of verisimilitude.

19. I am afraid of the Jews—More "afraid" of them than of God!

more afraid of contumely and ridicule than of calamity and ruin!

22. All the women—As the alternative of the mocking that might come to him should he go over to the Chaldeans, the prophet intimates that if he fails to do so the women of his household shall be insulted, and shall take up a satire against him. **In the mire**—A very expressive figure, setting forth the difficulties into which he had been led, and then deserted by his friends.

24. Let no man know—A king, and yet did not *dare* to have the particulars of this interview known!

26. I presented my supplication, etc.—True, but misleading. In this it has several parallels in the Bible. If asked whether it was right, the only safe answer is, We cannot fully decide. There may have been much affecting the case which we do not know. It is very certain that a man has a right to withhold the truth when to tell it would do harm.

return 'to Jonathan's house, to die there. 27 Then came all the princes unto Jeremiah, and asked him: and he told them according to all these words that the king had commanded. So 'they left off speaking with him; for the matter was not perceived. 28 So "Jeremiah abode in the court of the prison until the day that Jerusalem was taken: and he was *there* when Jerusalem was taken.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

IN the 'ninth year of Zedekiah king of Judah, in the tenth month, came Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon and all his army against Jerusalem, and they besieged it. 2 And in the eleventh year of Zedekiah, in the fourth month, the ninth day of the month, the city was

^f Chap. 37. 15.—8 Heb. *they were silent from him*.—^u Chap. 37. 21; 39. 14.—^a 2 Kings 25. 1-4; chap. 52. 4-7.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

CAPTURE OF JERUSALEM, 1-3.

1, 2. **Ninth year...eleventh year**—Comparing the two dates we learn that the siege lasted one and a half years. See 2 Kings xxv, 1-4.

3. **All the princes**, etc.—As above intimated, (chap. xxxviii, 17.) the king of Babylon was absent at Riblah, and hence the attacking army was under the command of these "princes." As to their names, certain difficulties have been pointed out by the expositors, such as: 1) One name is repeated. 2) Another has the name of the god Nebo at the end, while all other known compounds of this name place it at the beginning, as Nebuchadnezzar, etc. 3) From this name, too, is omitted the title of office, though it is used with the following. 4) In verse 13 the Babylonian grandees are again spoken of, but there are three and not four. For such reasons as these, all of which are really very inconclusive, some have conjectured that the text here is corrupt. But this harsh conjecture is totally unwarranted. Two princes of a name are certainly by no means impossible, as history has abundantly illustrated. **Middle gate**—The conjecture is, that this was a gate in the wall which divided Zion from the lower city. From this point both divisions could be most easily commanded.

broken up. 3 ^b And all the princes of the king of Babylon came in, and sat in the middle gate, *even* Nergal-sharezer, Sangar-nebo, Sarsechim, Rab-saris, Nergal-sharezer, Rab-mag, with all the residue of the princes of the king of Babylon.

4 ^c And it came to pass, *that* when Zedekiah the king of Judah saw them, and all the men of war, then they fled, and went forth out of the city by night, by the way of the king's garden, by the gate betwixt the two walls: and he went out the way of the plain. 5 But the Chaldeans' army pursued after them, and ^d overtook Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho: and when they had taken him, they brought him up to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon to ^e Riblah in

^b Chapter 38. 17.—^c 2 Kings 25. 4, etc.; chapter 32. 7, etc.—^d Chapter 32. 4; 38. 18, 23.—^e 2 Kings 23. 33.

FAITH OF ZEDEKIAH AND JEREMIAH, 4-14.

4. **Saw**—Perhaps literally, notwithstanding it was night, but the sense may be *perceived*—knew by the confusion. **Way of the king's garden...the way of the plain**—In Neh. iii, 15, occurs this expression: "The wall of the pool of Siloah by the king's garden." The **two walls** were that of Ophel on the east, and that of Zion on the west. The **gate** was probably in the short wall uniting these and stretching across the valley of the Tyropœon. It was not, as some have suggested, "the gate of the fountain," but the same that is called the "horse gate" in Neh. iii, 28. The "way of the plain" is more distinctly indicated in the following verse—the plain of Jericho.

5. **Riblah** is situated on the right bank of the Orontes, on the great road between Baalbec and Hums, about thirty-five miles from the former place. It is fully identified and bears its original name. Dr. Robinson points out the advantages of this locality as a place of encampment for a great army. "From this point the roads were open by Aleppo and the Euphrates to Nineveh, or by Palmyra to Babylon...by the end of Lebanon and the coast to Palestine and Egypt, or through the Bukâa and the Jordan

the land of Hamath, where he ¹gave judgment upon him. **6** Then the king of Babylon slew the sons of Zedekiah in Riblah before his eyes: also the king of Babylon slew all the nobles of Judah. **7** Moreover ¹he put out Zedekiah's eyes, and bound him ²with chains, to carry him to Babylon.

8 ³And the Chaldeans burned the king's house, and the houses of the people, with fire, and brake down the walls of Jerusalem. **9** ⁴Then Nebuzar-adan the ⁵captain of the guard carried away captive into Babylon the remnant of the people that remained in the city, and those that fell away, that fell to him, with the rest of the people that remained. **10** But Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard left of the poor of the

people, which had nothing, in the land of Judah, and gave them vineyards and fields ⁶at the same time.

11 Now Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon gave charge concerning Jeremiah ⁷to Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard, saying, **12** Take him, and ⁸look well to him, and do him no harm; but do unto him even as he shall say unto thee. **13** So Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard sent, and Nebushasban, Rab-saris, and Nergal-sharezer, Rabmag, and all the king of Babylon's princes; **14** Even they sent, ⁹and took Jeremiah out of the court of the prison, and committed him ¹⁰unto Gedaliah the son of ¹¹Ahikam the son of Shaphan, that he should carry him home: so he dwelt among the people.

¹ Heb. *spoke with him judgments*, chap. 4. 12. — ² Ezek. 12. 13, compared with chap. 32. 4. — ³ Heb. *with two brazen chains*, or, *fetters*. — ⁴ 2 Kings 25. 9; chap. 38. 18; 52. 13. — ⁵ 2 Kings 25. 11, etc.; chap. 52. 15, etc. — ⁶ Or, *chief marshal*.

⁴ Heb. *chief of the executioners*, or, *slaughter-men*; and so vers. 10, 11, etc. See Gen. 37. 36. — ⁵ Heb. *in that day*. — ⁶ Heb. *by the hand of*. — ⁷ Heb. *set thine eyes upon him*. — ⁸ Chap. 38. 28. — ⁹ Chap. 40. 5. — ¹⁰ Chap. 26. 24.

valley to the centre of the Holy Land."

Gave judgment—Compare i, 16.

7. Put out Zedekiah's eyes—Chap. xxxii, 4, says, "his eyes shall behold his eyes," and Ezek. xii, 13, "shall he not see it [Babylon] though he shall die there." In this passage we have the explanation of these apparently incongruous statements.

9. Nebuzar-adan seems to have been the highest officer under Nebuchadnezzar—the commander in chief of his army and his secretary of state. He was not at the capture of Jerusalem, but was sent there immediately upon its downfall. He decided as to the booty to be carried away; he appointed the governor to be left in charge; he released Jeremiah from his confinement, making to him at the same time a speech which, as coming from a heathen man, was certainly most remarkable. From all we know of him he certainly stands in a very attractive light. **Captain of the guard**—Literally, *chief of the executioners*—a phrase fearfully suggestive of the bloody and cruel nature of oriental administration. **Those that fell . . . to him**—That is, deserters.

11. Nebuchadrezzar . . . gave charge—For what reason we are not informed. Perhaps on account of his prophecies, of which he had knowledge

through the deserters; perhaps because he had been imprisoned as an ally of Babylon; perhaps because of some personal influence, which in a royal court is not always known. At all events, this command is no slight recognition of the personal importance accorded to Jeremiah, and of his prophecies as a factor in the history of the times.

14. Out of the court of the prison—From this account we should not doubt that Jeremiah was liberated at Jerusalem, but the following chapter makes it entirely certain that Ramah was the scene of his release. The explanation is, that the first gives the matter with great brevity, while the latter gives it in detail. It would appear that at the time of the capture of the city the male inhabitants who had not borne arms were carried to Ramah, as prisoners, and Jeremiah among them. In this summary account no mention is made of this, but he is spoken of as though he were still in the court of the prison. **Carry him home**—Literally, *into the house*. What house can only be conjectured. Hitzig says, the temple; Graf, the king's house; Keil, the official residence of Gedaliah, the governor. This last is satisfactory, and explains why the pronoun is omitted. If it had been

15 Now the word of the LORD came unto Jeremiah, while he was shut up in the court of the prison, saying, **16** Go and speak to ^m Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Behold, ⁿ I will bring my words upon this city for evil, and not for good; and they shall be *accomplished* in that day before thee. **17** But I will deliver thee in that day, saith the LORD; and thou shalt not be given into the hand of the men of whom thou *art* afraid. **18** For I will surely deliver thee, and thou shalt not fall by the sword, but ^o thy life shall be for a prey unto thee; ^p because thou hast put thy trust in me, saith the LORD.

CHAPTER XL.

THE word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD, ^a after that Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard had let him go from Ramah, when he had taken him being bound in ¹ chains among all that were carried away captive of Jerusalem and Judah, which were carried away captive unto Babylon. **2** And

^m Chap. 38. 7, 12. — ⁿ Dan. 9. 12. — ^o Chap. 21. 9; 45. 5. — ^p 1 Chron. 5. 20; Ps. 37. 40. — ^a Chap. 39. 14. — ¹ Or, *manacles*. — ^b Chap. 50. 7. — ^c Deut. 29. 24, 25; Dan. 9. 11.

his private residence we should certainly expect to see the pronoun.

CONSOLATORY MESSAGE TO EBED-MELECH, 15-18.

15. Word of the Lord came—Doubtless at the time of Jeremiah's deliverance by this eunuch, but it is placed here so as not to break the connexion of the more important body of narration.

16. Go and speak—This language suggests that Jeremiah was not kept in close confinement, but could, upon special permission, go out at seasonable times.

17. The men of whom thou art afraid—The Chaldeans. But some think the courtiers and princes, against whom Ebed-melech had set himself in delivering Jeremiah.

CHAPTER XL.

THE RELEASE OF JEREMIAH, 1-5.

1. The word which came—A general caption covering the four following chapters. This section is not all prophecy, but contains also the related

the captain of the guard took Jeremiah, and ^b said unto him, The LORD thy God hath pronounced this evil upon this place. **3** Now the LORD hath brought *it*, and done according as he hath said: ^c because ye have sinned against the LORD, and have not obeyed his voice, therefore this thing is come upon you. **4** And now, behold, I loose thee this day from the chains which ² were upon thine hand. ^d If it seem good unto thee to come with me into Babylon, come; and ³ I will look well unto thee: but if it seem ill unto thee to come with me into Babylon, forbear: behold, ^e all the land is before thee: whither it seemeth good and convenient for thee to go, thither go. **5** Now while he was not yet gone back, *he said*, Go back also to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan, ^f whom the king of Babylon hath made governor over the cities of Judah, and dwell with him among the people: or go wheresoever it seemeth convenient unto thee to go. So the captain of the guard gave him victuals and a reward, and let him go. ■ ^g Then

² Or, are *upon thine hand*. — ^d Chapter 39. 12. — ³ Heb. *I will set mine eye upon thee*. — ^e Genesis 20. 15. — ^f 2 Kings 25. 22, etc. — ^g Chapter 39. 14.

history. **Ramah** is about five miles north from Jerusalem. On the release of Jeremiah here, see notes on the preceding chapter. **Chains**—The marginal reading, *manacles*, gives the precise sense. **Captive unto Babylon**—The poor had been left, and the persons of consequence were gathered at Ramah to be carried away. The fact that Jeremiah was among them indicates that he was a person of some distinction.

2. The captain...said unto him—This message is certainly a most remarkable one. The language is not heathen, but Jewish. Probably Nebuzar-adan had become fully possessed of the substance of Jeremiah's predictions, and had come to feel that they were really from God.

5. While he was not yet gone back—While he hesitated. But the original here is an unsolved enigma, so that many boldly say it is impossible to understand it, it is undoubtedly corrupt. But this is too strong. The sense may be, *and as he yet answered nothing*.

went Jeremiah unto Gedaliah the son of Ahikam to ^bMizpah; and dwelt with him among the people that were left in the land.

7 ^cNow when all the captains of the forces which *were* in the fields, *even* they and their men, heard that the king of Babylon had made Gedaliah the son of Ahikam governor in the land, and had committed unto him men, and women, and children, and of ^kthe poor of the land, of them that were not carried away captive to Babylon; 8 Then they came to Gedaliah to Mizpah, ^leven Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and Johanan and Jonathan the sons of Kareah, and Seraiah the son of Tanhumeth, and the sons of Ephai the Netophathite, and Jezaniah the son of a Maachathite, they and their men. 9 And Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan sware unto them and to their men, saying, Fear not to serve the Chaldeans: dwell in the land, and serve the king of Babylon, and it shall be well with you. 10 As for me, behold, I will dwell at Mizpah,

^ato serve the Chaldeans, which will come unto us: but ye, gather ye wine, and summer fruits, and oil, and put *them* in your vessels, and dwell in your cities that ye have taken. 11 Likewise when all the Jews that *were* in Moab, and among the Ammonites, and in Edom, and that *were* in all the countries, heard that the king of Babylon had left a remnant of Judah, and that he had set over them Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan; 12 Even all the Jews returned out of all places whither they were driven, and came to the land of Judah, to Gedaliah, unto Mizpah, and gathered wine and summer fruits very much.

13 Moreover Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces that *were* in the fields, came to Gedaliah to Mizpah, 14 And said unto him, Dost thou certainly know that ^mBaalis the king of the Ammonites hath sent Ishmael the son of Nethaniah ⁿto slay thee? But Gedaliah the son of Ahikam believed them not. 15 Then Johanan

^a Judges 20. 1. — ⁱ 2 Kings 25. 23, etc. — ^k Chapter 39. 10. — ^l Chapter 41. 1.

⁴ Heb. *to stand before*, Deut. 1. 38. — ^m See chap. 41. 10. — ⁿ Heb. *to strike thee in soul*.

THE GATHERING OF THE PEOPLE TO GEDALIAH, 6-12.

6. **Mizpah**—In the tribe of Benjamin. Here Samuel judged the people, and here Saul was chosen king. (1 Sam. x, 17-24.) It is doubtless to be identified with the modern Neby Samuel, which is five miles northward from Jerusalem, and near Ramah. This is to be distinguished from various other places of the same name.

7. **Captains... in the fields**—The Jewish army had dispersed, and many of the leaders had taken refuge in the country immediately surrounding. Familiar as they were with the country they had no difficulty in finding places of concealment and safety. The list of these captains in the following verse is not necessarily exhaustive, but representative.

9. **Fear not to serve the Chaldeans**—The tone of this communication is friendly and encouraging. Gedaliah speaks to them as conquered and tributary, but assures them of the friendly disposition of the government which he represents.

10. **The Chaldeans, which will come unto us**—The meaning of this

somewhat ambiguous phrase seems to be, that he would remain among them as the representative of the Chaldeans, and as a medium of intercourse between the Chaldeans and the natives of Palestine. **Wine, and summer fruits, and oil**—These terms suggest not bare subsistence, but prosperity.

11. **All the Jews that were in Moab**—They had betaken themselves thither as a place of refuge.

THE CONSPIRACY AGAINST GEDALIAH REPORTED, 13-16.

13. **In the fields**—In the country as contrasted with the town or city.

14. **Baalis the king of the Ammonites**—From chap. xxvii, 3, we learn that this man was an ally of the king of Judah. Why he should seek to assassinate Gedaliah who had shown so friendly a disposition toward the Jews, does not appear. **Ishmael**—He may have been a willing instrument of this atrocious conspiracy because of his personal enmity to Gedaliah. He was of the royal line, being a descendant of David, and perhaps could ill brook the lordship of this alien and infidel. **Believed them**

the son of Kareah spake to Gedaliah in Mizpah secretly, saying, Let me go, I pray thee, and I will slay Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and no man shall know it: wherefore should he slay thee, that all the Jews which are gathered unto thee should be scattered, and the remnant in Judah perish? **16** But Gedaliah the son of Ahikam said unto Johanan the son of Kareah, Thou shalt not do this thing: for thou speakest falsely of Ishmael.

CHAPTER XLI.

NOW it came to pass in the seventh month, ^athat Ishmael the son of Nethaniah the son of Elishama, of the seed royal, and the princes of the king, even ten men with him, came unto Gedaliah the son of Ahikam to Mizpah; and there they did eat bread together in Mizpah. **2** Then arose Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and the ten men that were with him, and ^bsmote Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan with the sword, and slew him, whom the

^a 2 Kings 25. 25; chap. 40. 6, 8.—^b 2 Kings 25. 25.—^c Lev. 19. 27, 28; Deut. 14. 1; Isa. 15. 2.

not—Generous men are slowest to believe evil of their fellows.

16. Thou shalt not do this thing—Unwilling to believe treachery in others, he will not resort to it himself.

CHAPTER XLII.

THE MURDER OF GEDALIAH, 1-10.

1. Seventh month—Gedaliah was in office less than two months. **And the princes**, etc.—Rather, *and of the princes*, etc. The language covers simply Ishmael and the ten men with him. **Eat bread together**—Hospitality on the one side, the basest treachery on the other.

2. Had made governor—This was his crime. It was not simply murder, but the slaying of a ruler; striking down not merely a human life but the State in him.

3. Slew all the Jews—Namely, those in the governor's palace.

4. No man knew it—"No man" beyond Mizpah.

5. Shechem, ... Shiloh, ... and Samaria—These places are not named in topographical order. The reason does not appear. It may be on account of rhythm, or it may be that most of the

king of Babylon had made governor over the land. **3** Ishmael also slew all the Jews that were with him, *even* with Gedaliah, at Mizpah, and the Chaldeans that were found there, *and* the men of war. **4** And it came to pass the second day after he had slain Gedaliah, and no man knew it, **5** That there came certain from Shechem, from Shiloh, and from Samaria, *even* fourscore men, ^chaving their beards shaven, and their clothes rent, and having cut themselves, with offerings and incense in their hand, to bring them to ^dthe house of the Lord. **6** And Ishmael the son of Nethaniah went forth from Mizpah to meet them, ^eweeping all along as he went: and it came to pass, as he met them, he said unto them, Come to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam. **7** And it was so, when they came into the midst of the city, that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah slew them, *and cast them* into the midst of the pit, he, and the men that were with him. **8** But ten men were found among them that said unto Ishmael, Slay us

^d See 1 Sam. 1. 7; 2 Kings 25. 9.—^e 1 Heb. *in going and weeping*.

men came from Shechem, and that the other two places are simply mentioned as incidentally connected with the affair. **Cut themselves**—This practice was strictly forbidden by the law, (Lev. xix, 28, xxi, 5, Deut. xiv, 1,) and yet seems to have remained in common use. (Chapter vii, 29; Isa. xxii, 12; Ezek. vii, 18, etc.) These signs of grief had reference to the calamity which had befallen Jerusalem. **Offerings and incense**—Notwithstanding their violating Jewish law as above, there can be little doubt that they were Jews. Possibly in the region of Samaria, from which they came, heathen practices had been fallen into to an unusual extent.

6. Weeping all along as he went—Literally, *going to go and weep*—weeping continually. The idea is well expressed in our version. He simulated grief for the same purpose for which the Indian lies in ambush.

7. Slew them... into the midst of the pit—This is a pregnant construction, quite characteristic of the Hebrew. The words inserted by the translators are fully justified, and indeed necessary for the English reader.

not: for we have treasures in the field, of wheat, and of barley, and of oil, and of honey. So he forbore, and slew them not among their brethren. **9** Now the pit wherein Ishmael had cast all the dead bodies of the men, whom he had slain ²³ because of Gedaliah, *was it* ²⁴ which Asa the king had made for fear of Baasha king of Israel: *and* Ishmael the son of Nethaniah filled it with *them that were slain*. **10** Then Ishmael carried away captive all the residue of the people that *were* in Mizpah, *even* the king's daughters, and all the people that remained in Mizpah, ²⁵ whom Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard had committed to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam: and Ishmael the son of Nethaniah carried them away captive, and departed to go over to ²⁶ the Ammonites.

11 But when Johanan the son of Kareah, and all ¹ the captains of the forces that *were* with him, heard of all the evil that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah had done, **12** Then they took all the men,

² Or, *near Gedaliah*.—³ Heb. *by the hand*, or, *by the side of Gedaliah*.—⁴ 1 Kings 15. 22; 2 Chron. 16. 6.

8. Treasures—In Isa. xlv. 3, the same original word is translated “hidden riches.” Doubtless at this troublesome and dangerous time the practice of concealing the choicest products of the earth in caves or subterranean chambers must have been quite common.

9. Now the pit—From verse 7 it would appear probable that this pit was within the city, though this is not quite certain. Probably, then, the meaning here is, that this was simply a cistern of extraordinary size intended to supply water in time of siege. A store of water is as necessary as a fortification. **Because of Gedaliah**—The words have been variously interpreted. The most satisfactory sense is, *by the side of*, as in the margin. The reason of this extraordinary double assassination is not very clear. It could hardly be for booty merely, though it would seem that Ishmael was not indifferent to this. His real design was hostile to the Jews, and his object seems to be their ruin and dispersion. The whole affair expresses and illustrates the enmity of the Ammonite king, though the secret of his enmity we may not fully know.

and went to fight with Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and found him by ²⁷ the great waters that *are* in Gibeon. **13** Now it came to pass, *that* when all the people which *were* with Ishmael saw Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces that *were* with him, then they were glad. **14** So all the people that Ishmael had carried away captive from Mizpah cast about and returned, and went unto Johanan the son of Kareah. **15** But Ishmael the son of Nethaniah escaped from Johanan with eight men, and went to the Ammonites. **16** Then took Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces that *were* with him, all the remnant of the people whom he had recovered from Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, from Mizpah, after *that* he had slain Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, *even* mighty men of war, and the women, and the children, and the eunuchs, whom he had brought again from Gibeon: **17** And they departed, and dwelt in the habitation of ²⁸ Chim-

²⁷ Chap. 43. 6. — ²⁸ Chap. 40. 7. — ²⁹ Chap. 40. 14. — ³⁰ 1 Chap. 40. 7, 8, 13. — ³¹ 2 Sam. 2. 13. — ³² 2 Sam. 19. 37, 38.

10. King's daughters—Not only those who were really such, but all the younger female members of the royal household.

JOHANAN'S EXPEDITION TO AVENGE GEDALIAH'S DEATH, 11-18.

11. Johanan—The friend of Gedaliah, who had warned him of this plot.

12. The great waters that are in Gibeon—Probably a reservoir or pool. Robinson describes such a pool still existing there fed by a natural spring. Gibeon is about two miles north of Mizpah, and was one of the sacerdotal cities of Benjamin.

14. Cast about—Turned around.

16. Mighty men of war—In ver. 3 it is related that Ishmael “slew... the men of war.” That must refer to those who were about the person of Gedaliah; this, to other soldiers Johanan had been able to make prisoners. Among the **eunuchs** who are here mentioned, probably, may have been Ebed-melech.

17. Departed, and dwelt—Temporarily, until ready for a journey into Egypt. **Habitation of Chimham**—The inn of Chimham. The word translated “habitation” occurs no-

ham, which is by Beth-lehem, to go to enter into Egypt, **18** Because of the Chaldeans: for they were afraid of them, because Ishmael the son of Nethaniah had slain Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, ^m whom the king of Babylon made governor in the land.

CHAPTER XLII.

THEN all the captains of the forces, ^a and Johanan the son of Kareah, and Jezaniah the son of Hoshaiah, and all the people from the least even unto the greatest, came near, **2** And said unto Jeremiah the prophet, ¹ Let, we beseech thee, our supplication be accepted before thee, and ^b pray for us unto the LORD thy God, *even* for all this remnant; (for we are left *but* ^a a few of many, as thine eyes do behold us:) **3** That the LORD thy God may show us ^d the way wherein we may walk, and the thing that we may do. **4** Then

^m Chap. 40. 5. — ^a Chap. 40. 8, 13; 41. 11. — ¹ Or, *Let our supplication fall before thee.* — ^b 1 Sam. 7. 8; 12. 19; Isa. 37. 4; James 5. 16.

where else, but etymologically has the meaning of inn. Chimham was the founder of it. See 2 Sam. xix, 38, 40.

CHAPTER XLII.

THE REMNANT DESIRE JEREMIAH TO INQUIRE OF GOD, 1-6.

1. All the captains—The “captains” who were with the scattered Jews in the neighbourhood. **Johanan . . . and Jezaniah**—In addition to the “captains” above referred to. This last is called, in chap. xliii, 2, “Azariah.” This has led to the conjecture that an error has crept into the Hebrew text as to the form of this name. The Septuagint in both places gives the name Azariah.

2. Pray for us—Nägelsbach regards this as a piece of hypocrisy, since their mind seems to have been already strongly set to go to Egypt. But this is by no means necessary. They may have been sincerely desirous to know God's will, even though they greatly preferred that it should be in a given direction. It is not unusual for honest people to consult God or his servants, not so much to know the right as to secure approval for that already determined on.

4. I have heard you—I agree to

Jeremiah the prophet said unto them, I have heard *you*; behold, I will pray unto the LORD your God according to your words; and it shall come to pass, *that* ^e whatsoever thing the LORD shall answer you, I will declare *it* unto you; I will ^f keep nothing back from you. **5** Then they said to Jeremiah, ^g The LORD be a true and faithful witness between us, if we do not even according to all things for the which the LORD thy God shall send thee to us. **6** Whether *it be good*, or whether *it be evil*, we will obey the voice of the LORD our God, to whom we send thee; ^h that it may be well with us, when we obey the voice of the LORD our God.

7 And it came to pass after ten days, that the word of the LORD came unto Jeremiah. **8** Then called he Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces which *were* with him, and all the people from the least even to the

^e Lev. 26. 22. — ^d Ezra 8. 21. — ^e 1 Kings 23. 14. — ^f 1 Sam. 3. 18; Acts 20. 20. — ^g Gen. 31. 50. — ^h Deut. 6. 3; chap. 7. 23.

your request. **The Lord your God**—As he was their God they had a right to prefer to him their requests.

5. A true and faithful witness—“True and faithful” are from the same root, and both occupy emphatic positions in the sentence. “True and faithful is Jehovah.”

6. Good, or...evil—That is, agreeable or disagreeable according as in accord with our wishes or opposed to them. **We will obey**—The theory of these men was certainly perfect. “Piety obeys God without questioning, at all costs.” The pronoun here is *anu*, (אֲנֵנוּ) a form which occurs nowhere else in the Old Testament. It is, however, the ordinary form of the pronoun in the Talmud. It illustrates Jeremiah's tendency to use the language of the people rather than that of literature.

JEREMIAH'S ANSWER, (a) SAFETY IN JUDEA, 7-12.

7. After ten days—The delay was doubtless to prepare them for the answer. The excitement of the time would in some measure have passed away, and they would have had time to consider the situation of affairs. It is good for man to wait God's time.

greatest, **9** And said unto them, Thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, unto whom ye sent me to present your supplication before him; **10** If ye will still abide in this land, then will I build you, and not pull you down; and I will plant you, and not pluck you up: for I ^krepent me of the evil that I have done unto you. **11** Be not afraid of the king of Babylon, of whom ye are afraid; be not afraid of him, saith the Lord: ^lfor I am with you to save you, and to deliver you from his hand. **12** And ^mI will show mercies unto you, that he may have mercy upon you, and cause you to return to your own land.

13 But if ⁿye say, We will not dwell in this land, neither obey the voice of the Lord your God, **14** Saying, No; but we will go into the land of Egypt, where we shall see no war, nor hear the sound of the trumpet, nor have hunger of bread; and there will we dwell: **15** And now therefore hear the word of the Lord, ye remnant of Judah; Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; If ye ^owholly set ^pyour faces

to enter into Egypt, and go to sojourn there; **16** Then it shall come to pass, *that the sword,* ^qwhich ye feared, shall overtake you there in the land of Egypt; and the famine, whereof ye were afraid, ²shall follow close after you there in Egypt; and there ye shall die. **17** ³So shall it be with all the men that set their faces to go into Egypt to sojourn there; they shall die ^rby the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence: and ⁴none of them shall remain or escape from the evil that I will bring upon them. **18** For thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; As mine anger and my fury hath been ⁵poured forth upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem; so shall my fury be poured forth upon you, when ye shall enter into Egypt: and ⁶ye shall be an execration, and an astonishment, and a curse, and a reproach; and ye shall see this place no more.

19 The Lord hath said concerning you, O ye remnant of Judah; ⁷Go ye not into Egypt: know certainly that I have ⁸admonished you this day. **20** For

ⁱ Chap. 24. 6; 31. 28; 33. 7. — ^k Deut. 32. 36; chap. 18. 8. — ^l Isa. 43. 5; Rom. 8. 31. — ^m Psa. 106. 45, 46. — ⁿ Chap. 44. 16. — ^o Deut. 17. 16; chap. 44. 12, 13, 14. — ^p Luke 9. 51. — ^q Ezek. 11. 8. — ² Heb. *shall cleave after you.*

³ Heb. *So shall all the men be.* — ^r Chap. 21. 10; verse 22. — ^s See chap. 44. 14, 28. — ^t Chap. 7. 20. — ^u Chap. 18. 16; 24. 9; 26. 6; 29. 18, 22; 44. 12; Zech. 8. 13. — ^v Deut. 17. 16. — ⁴ Heb. *testified against you.*

9. Thus saith the Lord—How definite and vivid, apparently, was the consciousness of Jeremiah that he was the organ of God! And how clearly does such a belief as this on the part of individuals and the people generally lie at the foundation of every thing characteristic in the Old Testament.

10. If ye will still abide—One chapter of their probation had closed, another now opens. They had proven disobedient and corrupt under Jewish rule, and the catastrophe had come; they were again to be put to trial under Babylonian rule. Though they had proven rebellious, and so had been given over into the power of their enemies, God had by no means deserted them, or become their enemy. And so this message is full of assurances of his continued interest in their behalf: **"I repent me," "I will build you," "save you," "deliver you," "show mercies unto you."**

11. Be not afraid of the king of Babylon—For his power to harm you comes from me, and I will say to him, "Hitherto, but no farther."

JEREMIAH'S ANSWER, (b) DESTRUCTION IN EGYPT, 13-18.

14. Egypt...no war—A natural thought for the reason that in the recent troublous times the land of Egypt had been in a state of tranquillity. Egypt had indeed been defeated at Carchemish, but no battle had been fought on her own soil.

16. It shall come to pass—The evils which we seek to escape by disobedience we multiply unto ourselves thereby.

17. All the men—This universal expression is not to be pressed with mathematical exactness. The fact that some loyal and obedient men, like Jeremiah and Baruch, were carried to Egypt and afterward escaped does not stand against this passage. See chapter xlv, 28: "Yet a small number...shall return out of the land of Egypt."

JEREMIAH REPROVES THEIR HYPOCRISY, 19-22.

19. I have admonished—Protested, testified against you.

ye ^a dissembled in your hearts, when ye sent me unto the LORD your God, saying, "Pray for us unto the LORD our God; and according unto all that the LORD our God shall say, so declare unto us, and we will do *it*." **21** And now I have this day declared *it* to you; but ye have not obeyed the voice of the LORD your God, nor any *thing* for the which he hath sent me unto you. **22** Now therefore know certainly that ^a ye shall die by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence, in the place whither ye desire ^a to go and to sojourn.

CHAPTER XLIII.

AND it came to pass, *that* when Jeremiah had made an end of speaking unto all the people all the words of the LORD their God, for which the LORD their God had sent him to them, *even* all these words, **2** ^a Then spake Azariah the son of Hoshaiah, and Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the proud men, saying unto Jeremiah, Thou speakest falsely: the LORD our God hath not sent thee to say, Go not into Egypt to sojourn there: **3** But Baruch the son

^a Or, *ye have used deceit against your souls*.—^w Verse 2.—^x Verse 17; Ezek. 6. 11.
—^b Or, *to go to sojourn*.

20. Ye dissembled, etc.—The marginal reading is better: *ye have used deceit against your souls*. That is, your self-delusion is against your own souls.

CHAPTER XLIII.

THE JOURNEY TO EGYPT, 1-7.

2. Azariah—See note on chap. xlii, 1. Possibly the change in the order of the names of Johanan and Azariah or Jezaniah indicates that the latter was the leader in this opposition against the prophet. **Johanan** now comes before us in a new light. Before we knew him as the friend of Gedaliah and the avenger of his death, but now the opposer and persecutor of Jeremiah.

3. Baruch...setteth thee on—Why Baruch is given this offensive preeminence does not appear. He was probably a younger man than Jeremiah, and was to some extent the medium of his communications. He may thus have given offence, and may have infused into the messages something of his own ardour and zeal.

5. Remnant...returned from all

of Neriah setteth thee on against us, for to deliver us into the hand of the Chaldeans, that they might put us to death, and carry us away captives into Babylon. **4** So Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces, and all the people, obeyed not the voice of the LORD, to dwell in the land of Judah. **5** But Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces, took ^b all the remnant of Judah, that were returned from all nations, whither they had been driven, to dwell in the land of Judah; **6** *Even* men, and women, and children, ^c and the king's daughters, ^d and every person that Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard had left with Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan, and Jeremiah the prophet, and Baruch the son of Neriah. **7** So they came into the land of Egypt: for they obeyed not the voice of the LORD: thus came they *even* to ^e Tahpanhes.

■ Then came the word of the LORD unto Jeremiah in Tahpanhes, saying, ■ Take great stones in thine hand, and hide them in the clay in the brickkiln, which is at the entry of Pharaoh's house

^a Chap. 42. 1.—^b Chap. 40. 11, 12.—^c Chap. 41. 10.—^d Chap. 39. 10; 40. 7.—^e Chap. 2. 16, and 44. 1, called *Hanes*, Isa. 30. 4.

nations—This language only describes the people in this company. It coming to be known that the administration of the Chaldeans was friendly and fostering, there was a tendency on the part of the people who had fled before the invading army and taken refuge among other peoples to return. Hence such a phrase as this of the text describes them much as "and all those who were still alive, having escaped the calamities of the time."

7. Tahpanhes—See chap. ii, 16. This was a frontier town on the Pelusian branch of the Nile. It is the Dapline of Herodotus. It is repeatedly mentioned by Jeremiah and Ezekiel, and seems to have been a place of considerable importance, as in the passage above referred to "Noph and Tahpanhes" are made to represent Egypt, and in verse 9 we learn that Pharaoh had a palace there.

PREDICTION REGARDING EGYPT, 8-13.

9. Hide them in the clay in the brickkiln—The object of this symbolical action is perfectly plain; but

in Tahpanhes, in the sight of the men of Judah; **10** And say unto them, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will send and take Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and will set his throne upon these stones that I have hid; and he shall spread his royal pavilion over

them. **11** *And when he cometh, he shall smite the land of Egypt, and deliver ^bsuch as are for death to death; and such as are for captivity to captivity; and such as are for the sword to the sword. **12** And I will kindle a fire in the houses of ⁱthe gods of Egypt; and he shall burn them, and carry them

^f Chap. 25, 9; 27, 6; see Ezek. 29, 18, 20.—^g Chap. 44, 13; 46, 13.

^h Chapter 15, 2; Zechariah 11, 9.—ⁱ Chapter 46, 25.

to understand the action itself is exceedingly difficult. The great doubt is, as to the sense of the word translated "brickkiln." The word is used in two other places, neither one of which sheds a very certain light upon the word. In 2 Sam. xii, 31, it is said of David that "he made them (the Ammonites) to pass through the brickkiln." In Nahum iii, 14, the people are exhorted to prepare for the siege, and this language is employed: "Go into clay, and tread the mortar, make strong the brickkiln." Each one of these passages has its special difficulty, and so they cannot be appealed to with much confidence as settling the meaning of the word. Fürst gives to the word in 2 Sam. xii, 31, (Kethib,) the sense of a heathen deity; and this, though conjectural rather than ascertained, is possibly right. He gives to the word in Nahum iii, 14, the sense of "brick," such as would be used in closing up the breaches of the walls, and this sense perfectly fits the passage. In this place he gives the word the sense of "a brick-shaped quadrangle," and understands it to be a pavement of brick or tile in front of the palace. This comes very nearly to the sense of the leading versions, the Vulgate rendering, "a brick wall," the Syriac "a brick mould," and the LXX "the propylæa." Taking this sense, Jeremiah was instructed to take stones and conceal them in clay or mortar on the pavement in front of the palace. The clay represented the fragile power of the Egyptians, which would now fail; the stones the more enduring power of the Babylonians. The place was a suitable one for this act. That the prophet would be permitted to place stones and mortar in such a place for such a purpose

is not incredible—certainly not impossible. The place was suitable, indicating the establishing of a royal power. The clay was the material out of which the palace itself was built. Pharaoh's dominion was as the crumbling clay; Nebuchadrezzar's was symbolized by the more enduring stones.

There is but one other view of this passage entitled to consideration. Neumann prefers the sense "brickkiln," and explains the difficulty that it should be found in front of the palace, on the supposition that it was there to supply material for the construction of the palace, and had not yet been removed. This view is approved by Keil and Nägelsbach. But, to say the least, while it is a possible, it is certainly not a probable, conjecture; and even if the sense "brickkiln" were established, the hiding in the clay in the brickkiln is hard to understand.

10. Royal pavilion—The original word occurs nowhere else. Keil explains it as "the gorgeous tapestry with which the seat of the throne was covered;" Smith, as a "canopy"—the parasol which was carried over the head of the monarch when exposed to the sun's rays, and so was an emblem of royalty. See Rawlinson's *Ancient Monarchies*, i, 495. The sense favoured by Keil suits the language best.

11. Such as are for death to death—No theological importance can be found in this peculiar phraseology. It is neither fatalistic nor predestinarian.

12. I will kindle . . . he shall burn—Because of the difference in person here, many critics have conjectured a change of one letter in the text, so that the true reading would be *he shall kindle*. This is unwarranted.

away captives: and he shall array himself with the land of Egypt, as a shepherd putteth on his garment; and he shall go forth from thence in peace.

13 He shall break also the ¹images of ²Beth-shemesh, that is in the land of Egypt; and the houses of the gods of the Egyptians shall be burn with fire.

CHAPTER XLIV.

THE word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the Jews which dwell in the land of Egypt, which dwell at ^aMigdol, and at ^bTahpanhes, and at ^cNoph, and in the country of Pathros, saying, **2** Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Ye have seen all the evil that I have brought upon Jerusalem, and upon all the cities of Judah; and, behold, this day they are ^aa desolation, and no man dwelleth therein; **3** Be-

¹ Heb. *statues*, or, *standing images*. —
² Or, *The house of the sun*. — ^a Exod. 14. 2;
chap. 46. 14. — ^b Chap. 43. 7. — ^c Isa. 19. 13. —
^d Chap. 9. 11; 34. 22.

Such conjectural emendations of the text should be rarely ventured upon or accepted. The great majority of the corrections of the Masorites themselves are now seen to be mistakes and not corrections. God kindles the fire; Nebuchadrezzar applies it to its purpose of destruction. Both God and Nebuchadrezzar were concerned in this work. Men have their purposes, which are often low, selfish, and wicked; God has his purpose, always wise and just. **And he shall array** — “As easily as any shepherd in the open field wraps himself in his cloak, so will he take the whole of Egypt in his hand and be able to throw it round him like a light garment.” — *Ewald*.

13. Images—Obelisks. Two of these (of which there were several before the famous “temple of the sun”) were each one hundred and fifty feet high. **Beth-shemesh** — Literally, *house of the sun*; the name of the temple being given to the city. It is also called in the Old Testament “On:” it was also known to the Greeks as Heliopolis. It was situated about twenty miles northeast from Memphis. The one famous obelisk now marking the site of this city is dated about 2050 B. C.

cause of their wickedness which they have committed to provoke me to anger, in that they went ^ato burn incense, ^aand to ^aserve other gods, whom they knew not, ^aneither they, ye, nor your fathers. **4** Howbeit ^aI sent unto you all my servants the prophets, rising early and sending *them*, saying, Oh, do not this abominable thing that I hate. **5** But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear to turn from their wickedness, to burn no incense unto other gods. **6** Wherefore ^amy fury and mine anger was poured forth, and was kindled in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem: and they are wasted and desolate, as at this day. **7** Therefore now thus saith the LORD, the God of hosts, the God of Israel; Wherefore commit ye *this* great evil ^aagainst your souls, to cut off from you man and

^e Chapter 19. 4. — ^f Deuteronomy 13. 6; 32. 17.
— ^g 2 Chronicles 36. 15; chapter 7. 25; 25. 4;
25. 5; 29. 19. — ^h Chapter 42. 18. — ⁱ Numbers
16. 38; chapter 7. 19.

CHAPTER XLIV.

Jeremiah's Last Prophecy.

JUDAH'S PRESENT DESOLATION THE
RESULT OF IDOLATRY, 1-7.

1. Which dwell at Migdol—Literally, *tower*. Not the “Migdol” of Exod. xiv, 2, but the fortress situated on the northern boundary of Egypt, twelve Roman miles from Pelusium. From this heading it appears that the Jews had settled in various parts of the land of Egypt; so that probably considerable time separates this chapter from the last. For **Noph** and **Tahpanhes**, see chap. ii, 16, and xliii, 7. **Pathros** was Upper Egypt—the Thebais of the Greeks and Romans.

2. Evil . . . brought upon Jerusalem — “If I spared not my own sacred city, much less shall ye be safe in Egypt, which I loathe.”

3. Went to burn — Literally, *by going to burn*. Perverse assiduity in idolatry is here implied.

4. Rising early — Expressive of his personal care and solicitude. **This abominable thing** — Literally, *the thing of this abomination*, idolatry. The language is emotional, and shows the intensity of God's hatred of it.

7. Against your souls — Lives. This is more fully set forth in the

woman, child and suckling, ¹out of Judah, to leave you none to remain; **8** In that ye ^kprovoke me unto wrath with the works of your hands, burning incense unto other gods in the land of Egypt, whither ye be gone to dwell, that ye might cut yourselves off, and that ye might be ^la curse and a reproach among all the nations of the earth? **9** Have ye forgotten the ²wickedness of your fathers, and the wickedness of the kings of Judah, and the wickedness of their wives, and your own wickedness, and the wickedness of your wives, which they have committed in the land of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem? **10** They are not ³humbled *even* unto this day, neither have they ^mfeared, nor walked in my law, nor in my statutes, that I set before you and before your fathers.

11 Therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, ⁿI will set my face against you for evil, and to cut off all Judah. **12** And I will take the remnant of Judah, that have set their faces to go into the land of Egypt

¹ Heb. *out of the midst of Judah*.—*k* Chap. 25. 6, 7.—*l* Chap. 42. 18; verse 12.—² Heb. *wickednesses*, or, *punishments*, etc.—³ Heb. *contrite*, Psa. 51. 17.

language to cut off from you man and woman, child and suckling. *Sin is simply an all-comprehending suicide!*

PERSISTENCE IN IDOLATRY WILL BRING ONLY RUIN, 8-14.

9. Wickedness of their wives—Literally, *his* "wives." The singular is difficult of explanation, and the translators have made a very natural, though unwarranted, change. The LXX has for "his wives" "your princes," and Ewald accepts this as the true reading. Taking the Hebrew text, however, as it stands, it is probably best to refer the pronoun *his* to Judah as a nation. As to "the wickedness of his wives," see verses 15 and 19. The worship of the queen of heaven was peculiarly a feminine idolatry.

10. Not humbled—Not contrite and penitent. Literally, *they have not been crushed*.

11. All Judah—Namely, all Judah in Egypt. The passage has no reference to those in Babylon.

to sojourn there, and ^othey shall all be consumed, and fall in the land of Egypt; they shall *even* be consumed by the sword and by the famine: they shall die, from the least even unto the greatest, by the sword and by the famine: and ^pthey shall be an execration, and an astonishment, and a curse, and a reproach. **13** ^qFor I will punish them that dwell in the land of Egypt, as I have punished Jerusalem, by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence: **14** So that none of the remnant of Judah, which are gone into the land of Egypt to sojourn there, shall escape or remain, that they should return into the land of Judah, to the which they ^rhave a desire to return to dwell there: for ^rnone shall return but such as shall escape.

15 Then all the men which knew that their wives had burned incense unto other gods, and all the women that stood by, a great multitude, even all the people that dwell in the land of Egypt, in Pathros, answered Jeremiah, saying, **16** *As for the word that thou hast*

m Prov. 28. 14.—*n* Lev. 17. 10; 20. 5, 6; chap. 21. 10; Amos 9. 4.—*o* Chap. 42. 15, 16, 17, 22.—*p* Chap. 42. 18.—*q* Chap. 43. 11.—⁴ Heb. *lift up their soul*.—*r* Verse 28.

12. They shall all be consumed—The original is emphatic by repetition. The exact translation is:

They shall all be consumed;
In the land of Egypt they shall fall;
By sword and famine shall they be consumed;
Small and great, by sword and famine shall they die.

14. But such as shall escape—This qualifies and explains the broad statement in previous verses. There would be exceptions to this universal cutting off, but they would be individual fugitives.

REPLY OF THE JUDAHITES, THAT THEY WERE PROSPEROUS EVEN WHEN IDOLATROUS, 15-19.

15. Had burned—Rather, *burned*, or *were burning*. The practice was even then going on. **A great multitude**—It would seem probable that this was at a great religious feast or convocation, which accounts for a great congregation of women. **Answered Jeremiah, saying**—The substance of this answer is, that worship of the queen of heaven had in their

spoken unto us in the name of the LORD, "we will not hearken unto thee.

17 But we will certainly do 'whatsoever thing goeth forth out of our own mouth, to burn incense unto the⁶ "queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her, as we have done, we, and our fathers, our kings, and our princes, in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem: for *then* had we plenty of "victuals, and were well, and saw no evil. **18** But since we left off to burn incense to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her, we have wanted all *things*, and have been consumed by the sword and by the famine. **19** "And when we burned incense to the queen of heaven, and poured out drink offerings unto her, did we make her cakes to worship her, and pour out drink offerings unto her, without our "men?

20 Then Jeremiah said unto all the people, to the men, and to the women, and to all the people which had given him *that* answer, saying, **21** The incense that ye burned in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem,

^s So chap. 6. 16. — ^t Num. 30. 12; Deut. 23. 23; Judges 11. 36; see verse 25. — ⁵ Or, *frame of heaven*. — ^u Chap. 7. 18. — ⁶ Heb. *bread*.

experience been associated with prosperity, but the leaving off of this worship had been followed by calamity.

17. Goeth forth out of our own mouth—Probably alluding to the religious vows they had taken.

18. We have wanted all things—True, but the fact that a given evil followed a certain action is not proof that the evil was the result of that action. It may have been the effect of an anterior action; which it clearly was in this case.

19. Make her cakes to worship her—The meaning of the word translated to **worship** has been entirely misapprehended by the translators. Its import is, "to represent her image," alluding to the crescent shape of the cakes. The same word is used in Job x, 8, and is there translated "fashioned." Keil's version expresses the sense well. "Have we made cakes to her, making an image of her and pouring out libations to her, without our husbands?" **Without our men**—Showing that this is the language of the women, and that the men agreed with them in their idolatry. It

ye and your fathers, your kings and your princes, and the people of the land, did not the LORD remember them, and came it *not* into his mind? **22** So that the LORD could no longer bear, because of the evil of your doings, *and* because of the abominations which ye have committed; therefore is your land "a desolation, and an astonishment, and a curse, without an inhabitant, "as at this day. **23** Because ye have burned incense, and because ye have sinned against the LORD, and have not obeyed the voice of the LORD, nor walked in his law, nor in his statutes, nor in his testimonies; "therefore this evil is happened unto you, as at this day. **24** Moreover Jeremiah said unto all the people, and to all the women, Hear the word of the LORD, all Judah "that *are* in the land of Egypt: **25** Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, saying; "Ye and your wives have both spoken with your mouths, and fulfilled with your hand, saying, We will surely perform our vows that we have vowed, to burn incense to the queen of heaven, and to

^v Chap. 7. 18. — ⁷ Or, *husbands*. — ^w Chap. 25. 11, 18, 33. — ^x Verse 6. — ^y Dan. 9. 11. 12. — ^z Chap. 43. 7; verse 15. — ^a Verse 15, etc.

could not be pleaded that their vows were unlawful because they had not the consent of their husbands.

JEREMIAH MAINTAINS THAT IDOLATRY WAS THE REAL CAUSE OF THE PEOPLE'S MISERY, 21-23.

21. Incense that ye burned . . . did not the Lord remember—Certainly he did: and because it was in **his mind**, it incited his just displeasure.

22. Therefore is your land a desolation—This is the substance of Jeremiah's answer. That to which they attributed their prosperity was the one cause of their ruin. The Lord had borne with them for many years, and this explains the prosperity mentioned in verse 17; but when he could no longer bear, calamity and destruction came.

JEREMIAH PREDICTS FURTHER DISTRESS, 24-30.

25. Fulfilled with your hand—Literally, *hands*, alluding to the making of the sacrificial cakes. **Perform our vows**—How many think it good to fulfil a promise to do evil! To keep

pour out drink offerings unto her: ye will surely accomplish your vows, and surely perform your vows. **26** Therefore hear ye the word of the LORD, all Judah that dwell in the land of Egypt; Behold, ^bI have sworn by my great name, saith the LORD, that ^cmy name shall no more be named in the mouth of any man of Judah in all the land of Egypt, saying, The Lord God liveth. **27** ^dBehold, I will watch over them for evil, and not for good: and all the men of Judah that are in the land of Egypt ^eshall be consumed by the sword and by the famine, until there be an end of them. **28** Yet ^fa small number that escape the sword shall return out of the

^b Gen. 22, 16.—^c Ezek. 20, 39.—^d Chap. 1, 10; 31, 28; Ezek. 7, 6.—^e Verse 12.—^f Verse 14; Isa. 27, 13.

a vow they had never any right to make is with them meritorious.

26. My name shall no more be named—As this is Jehovah's final sentence it is introduced by a formal oath. Jehovah repudiates his covenant relation to them. They are no longer his people, and he is no longer their God.

27. Watch...for evil—As the wild beast watches for his prey. See chap. i, 12, and v, 6.

28. A small number...shall return—Literally, *and fugitives from the sword shall return from the land of Egypt to the land of Judah, men of numbers, etc.* The last phrase suggests the fewness of those who shall escape—so few that they can be counted. **Whose words...mine, or theirs**—Literally, *the word from me or from them.* The allusion is to the particular word given above.

29, 30. This shall be a sign...I will give Pharaoh-hophra, etc.—This monarch succeeded to the Egyptian throne the year before the capture of Jerusalem. He reigned nineteen years. Finally a rebellion occurred on account of his defeat by the Cyrenians, and the suspicion that he had betrayed the native troops in order to establish his personal ascendancy by means of his mercenaries. Amasis commanded the Egyptians and Hophra the Greek mercenaries. The latter was defeated and taken prisoner, and, after being kept some time in confinement, he was given

land of Egypt into the land of Judah; and all the remnant of Judah, that are gone into the land of Egypt to sojourn there, shall know whose ^g words shall stand, ^h mine, or theirs.

29 And this *shall* be a sign unto you, saith the LORD, that I will punish you in this place, that ye may know that my words shall ⁱ surely stand against you for evil: **30** Thus saith the LORD; Behold, ^jI will give Pharaoh-hophra king of Egypt into the hand of his enemies, and into the hand of them that seek his life; as I gave ^k Zedekiah king of Judah into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, his enemy, and that sought his life.

^g Verses 17, 25, 26.—^h Heb. *from me, or them.*
ⁱ Psa. 33, 11.—^j Chap. 46, 25, 26; Ezek. 29, 3, etc.; 30, 21, etc.—^k Chap. 39, 5.

up to his enemies, who put him to death by strangling.

Some expositors have objected to the genuineness of the passage, vers. 29 and 30, on internal grounds: 1) That the fulfilment is too exact. 2) That it is too remote. 3) That the style is dead and mechanical. 4) There is no other such sign in Jeremiah. But there is little force in any of these considerations, while the last is evidently in favour of the genuineness of the passage. If there is nothing like it, it is not likely to be an interpolation. As to the objection that the fulfilment was too distant to be a sign to those to whom Jeremiah spoke, we have to say: (a) To be a sign it need not be immediate. Its value as such is increased rather than diminished by the lapse of time. (b) But its fulfilment began within possibly six or eight years. Hophra had now been two years on the throne. It has been estimated that he was ten years a prisoner. His death occurred nineteen years after he became king.

Some difficulty has been experienced by Nägelsbach in reconciling the apparent teaching of this chapter, that the Jews in Egypt should be utterly exterminated, with the fact that in the time of Alexander they were very numerous, and Ptolemy Philadelphus at one time liberated 100,000 Jewish slaves. In reply: 1) This chapter denounces extermination against such Jews only as at that time went down

CHAPTER XLV.

THE word that Jeremiah the prophet spake unto Baruch the son of Neriah, when he had written these words in a book at the mouth of Jeremiah, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, saying, **2** Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, unto thee, O Baruch; **3** Thou didst say, Woe is me now! for the LORD hath added grief to my sorrow; I fainted in my sighing, and I find no rest.

4 Thus shalt thou say unto him, The LORD saith thus; Behold, ^b that which

^a Chap. 36, 1, 4, 32. — ^b Isa. 5, 5. — ^c Chap. 25, 26. — ^d Chap. 21, 9; 38, 2; 39, 18.

to Egypt contrary to the command of God, and persisted in their idolatry. Those who were there before, those who came after, (and Ptolemy I., about 320 B. C., captured Jerusalem on a sabbath day, took a great number of captives, and carried them down into Egypt,) and those who maintained the worship of Jehovah, are excluded from the judgments denounced in this chapter. **2)** There is no proof that at the time of Alexander the Jews in Egypt were very numerous. **3)** Centuries of time provide for great increase, not only by propagation, but also by immigration.

CHAPTER XLV.

THE TIME AND OCCASION, 1.

1. Unto Baruch—As Paul and John wrote letters to individuals concerning their personal relations and experiences, so Jeremiah receives the message for his bosom friend and amanuensis. And yet the message suited to him is fitly recorded as calculated to admonish and help many others of like trials and like faith. **Had written**—Rather, *wrote*, or *was writing*. **These words**—The messages of Jeremiah which Baruch wrote down. **Fourth year of Jehoiakim**—This is one of the time limits of these prophecies. There is no reason to doubt that the other is the beginning of Jeremiah's work as a prophet. The time of writing down these addresses is the same as that of the writing related in chapter xxxvi. Chronologically they both belong to the same period.

I have built will I break down, and that which I have planted I will pluck up, even this whole land. **5** And seekest thou great things for thyself? seek them not: for, behold, ^c I will bring evil upon all flesh, saith the LORD: but thy life will I give unto thee ^d for a prey in all places whither thou goest.

CHAPTER XLVI.

THE word of the LORD which came to Jeremiah the prophet against ^a the Gentiles; **2** Against Egypt, ^b against the army of Pharaoh-necho king of

^a Chap. 25, 15, etc. — ^b 2 Kings 23, 29; 2 Chron. 35, 20. Fulfilled presently.

THE MESSAGE, 2-5.

3. Grief to my sorrow—Better, *sorrow to my pain*; pain at the sin and obduracy of the people; sorrow for their calamities. **I fainted in my sighing**—I am weary with sighing. An expression similar to that of Psa. vi, 7. It is one of numerous illustrations in the Old Testament showing how thoroughly interwoven were these psalms with the common thought and experience of the people.

4. Built... break down—This announces God's purpose and his right. His proprietorship is involved in that he is the builder, and out of this comes his right to destroy. **Even this whole land**—Rather, *whole earth*. The original word is ambiguous, but the parallel **all flesh** in the following verse limits its import to that land.

5. Great things for thyself—That is, in the way of worldly prosperity. When the whole earth is involved in judgment no individual can reasonably seek for any thing great. If he can make his life his prey he ought not to ask more.

CHAPTER XLVI.

THE CAPTION—GENERAL AND PARTICULAR, 1, 2.

1. Against the Gentiles—This is a general caption, embracing the following four chapters.

2. Against Egypt—The particular caption of the passage immediately following. As there are two sections pertaining to Egypt (3-12 and 13-26) this title may relate to both. **Pharaoh-necho**—Said by Manetho to have

Egypt, which was by the river Euphrates in Carchemish, which Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon smote in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah. **3** Order ye the buckler and shield, and draw near to battle. **4** Harness the horses; and get up, ye horsemen, and stand forth with your helmets; furbish the spears, and put on the brigandines. **5** Wherefore have I seen them dismayed and turned away

c So chap. 51. 11, 12; Nah. 2. 1; 3. 14. — *1* Heb. *broken in pieces*. — *2* Heb. *fled a flight*.

been the sixth king of the twenty-sixth dynasty. His date has been fixed from 611 to 595 B. C. **Carchemish**—The site of this important ancient city is not determined beyond question. That it was on the Euphrates is settled by this passage. The common opinion is, that it was at the junction of the Chebar with the Euphrates, and identical with the Greek Circesium. Others, however, locate it higher up the Euphrates, about in latitude thirty-six. Professor Rawlinson favours this. The place is mentioned in the cuneiform inscriptions, and also in the Egyptian hieroglyphical sculptures. Circesium, which is the site commonly identified with "Carchemish," was built on a narrow wedge-shaped plain in the fork between the two rivers. All that now remains of it is ruins.

SONG OF TRIUMPH FOR THE DEFEAT OF EGYPT, 3-12.

3. Order—Prepare, make ready. **Buckler**—Small shield, carried by the light-armed troops. **Shield**—A piece of larger defensive size for the heavy armed troops.

4. Harness the horses—That is, to the chariots. **Get up, ye horsemen**—The original of this last word means riding-horses in 1 Kings iv, 26; x, 26; Ezek. xxvii, 14; and Joel ii, 4. Hence Keil translates here "*mount the steeds*." **Stand forth with your helmets**—Implying that battle is at hand. **Brigandines**—Coats of mail. Brigand, brigade, brigadier, brigandine, are all words of a family, and the original meaning of brigand (soldier) is a key to the whole.

5. Thus far the description of the

back? and their mighty ones are ¹ beaten down, and are ² fled apace, and look not back: for ³ fear was round about, saith the Lord. **6** Let not the swift flee away, nor the mighty man escape; they shall ⁴ stumble, and fall toward the north by the river Euphrates. **7** Who is this that cometh up ⁵ as a flood, whose waters are moved as the rivers? **8** Egypt riseth up like a flood, and his waters are moved like the rivers; and he saith, I

d Chap. 6. 25; 49. 29. — *e* Dan. 11. 19. — *f* See Isa. 8. 7, 8; chap. 47. 2; Dan. 11. 22.

embattled host. Now comes the picture of the defeat and discomfiture. **Wherefore have I seen them, etc.**—The original is more expressive and poetical. *Why have I seen? They are terror-stricken! They are giving away back. Their heroes are broken, and utterly fled, and turn not back. Terror is round about (on every side) saith Jehovah. The swift shall not flee and the hero shall not escape. Towards the north, by the side of the river Euphrates, they shall stumble and fall.* In graphic force this passage is masterly. However simple and unadorned may be the style of Jeremiah when treating of plain matters which were near to his own people, here we have a brilliancy and poetic beauty not often surpassed.

7, 8. In the preceding verses we have a picture of the army and its defeat; in those which follow the same story is told, but with grander imagery—a mighty rising of the whole land of Egypt, even as the floods of their own Nile overspread the land, and then God visits upon that people his overwhelming judgments. **Egypt riseth up like a flood**—The word for "flood," here and in the preceding verse, is נָהָר, (*yeor*), and is thought by some—Keil, for instance—to be the name of the Nile River taken from the Egyptian into the Hebrew. On the contrary, Fürst maintains the Shemitic origin not only of this, but all the other names of the Nile in the Old Testament. Certain it is, that this name is prevailingly applied to the Nile, as in Gen. xli, etc.; Exod. i, 22, etc., etc., and just as little doubt is there that the metaphor of this passage comes from the Nile overflow.

will go up, *and* will cover the earth; I will destroy the city and the inhabitants thereof. ■ Come up, ye horses; and rage, ye chariots; and let the mighty men come forth; the ³ Ethiopians and the ⁴ Libyans, that handle the shield; and the Lydians, ⁵ that handle *and* bend the bow. **10** For this is ^a the day of the Lord God of hosts, a day of vengeance, that he may avenge him of his adversaries; and ¹ the sword shall devour, and it shall be satiate and made drunk with their blood: for the Lord God of hosts ^a hath a sacrifice in the north country by the river Euphrates. **11** ¹ Go up into Gilead, and take balm, ^m O virgin, the daughter of Egypt: in vain shalt thou use many medicines; for ^s ^a thou shalt not be cured. **12** The nations have heard of thy shame, and thy cry hath filled the land: for the mighty man

hath stumbled against the mighty, *and* they are fallen both together.

13 The word that the Lord spake to Jeremiah the prophet, how Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon should come *and* ^a smite the land of Egypt. **14** Declare ye in Egypt, and publish in Migdol, and publish in Noph and in Tahpanhes: say ye, ^p Stand fast, and prepare thee; for ^a the sword shall devour round about thee. **15** Why are thy valiant men swept away? they stood not, because the Lord did drive them. **16** He ^a made many to fall, yea, ^a one fell upon another: and they said, Arise, and let us go again to our own people, and to the land of our nativity, from the oppressing sword. **17** They did cry there, Pharaoh king of Egypt *is but* a noise; he hath passed the time appointed. **18** As I live, saith the King, ^a whose

³ Heb. *Cush*.—⁴ Heb. *Put*.—^a Isa. 66. 19.—^h Isa. 13. 6; Joel 1. 15; 2. 1.—ⁱ Deut. 32. 42; Isa. 34. 6.—^k Isa. 34. 6; Zeph. 1. 7; see Ezek. 39. 17.—^l Chap. 8. 22; 51. 8.—^m Isa. 47. 1.—⁵ Heb. *no cure shall be unto thee*.

ⁿ Ezek. 30. 21.—^o Isa. 19. 1; chap. 43. 10. 11; Ezek. 29; 30; 32. Fulfilled about 571.—^p Verses 3, 4.—^q Verse 10.—^s Heb. *multiplied the fuller*.—^r Lev. 26. 37.—^s Isa. 47. 4; 48. 2; chap. 48. 15.

9. Ethiopians... Libyans... Lydians—Auxiliaries or mercenaries, because the Egyptians were not themselves of such physical vigour as to make a nation of soldiers. There is a similar description of the Egyptian army in Ezek. xxx, 5.

10. For this is the day, etc.—Rather, *but that day belongs to the Lord of hosts*. **The Lord... hath a sacrifice**—The Lord is making ready to slay sacrifices. So the slaughter of the Egyptians is represented.

11. Balm—Balsam. **Not be cured**—The blow is irreparable.

PROPHECY AGAINST EGYPT, 13-26.

13. Here begins the second prophecy of Egypt. Like the former, it is poetic in form, but differs in that the scene of it is laid in Egypt, and not on the distant Euphrates.

14. Migdol... Noph... Tahpanhes—Not, as some, "the east, south, and north," for Migdol and Tahpanhes are frontier towns on the north, and Noph is Memphis, the northern capital. These are mentioned as being best known to the Jews. **The sword shall devour round about thee**—Syrians, Jews, Moabites, Ammonites, and Tyrians. Or it may be that reference is had to the countries near

Egypt, as Philistia and Sodom, with Palestine.

15. Valiant—The original is plural in the common text, but the verb and the pronoun are singular. The literal reading of the verse is, *Why is thy valiant cast down? He stood not, because Jehovah thrust him down*. Instead of this plural form many MSS. and the most important ancient Versions—the LXX, the Vulgate, and several of the other old Greek Versions, all have the singular. As to the meaning of the word: in several passages it is translated *stallions*; elsewhere as an epithet of *bulls*. The probability, then, seems to lie in the direction of the singular form of the noun, which, for some reason, perhaps from a misapprehension of the meaning on the part of the copyists, has become pluralized; and that the true meaning is *apis*, a bull. The reference, then, is to the god Apis, or the power which represents him. *Why is thy strong one swept away?*

16. He (that is, Jehovah) **made many to fall**—The mighty one does not stand; so the individuals stumble and fall one over the other.

17. Noise—Rather, *destruction*. *There they cry, Pharaoh... is destruction*.

name *is* The Lord of hosts, Surely as Tabor is among the mountains, and as Carmel by the sea, *so* shall he come. **19** O 'thou daughter dwelling in Egypt, 'furnish thyself "to go into captivity: for Noph shall be waste and desolate without an inhabitant. **20** Egypt *is like* a very fair 'heifer, *but* destruction cometh; it cometh "out of the north. **21** Also her hired men *are* in the midst of her like "fatted bullocks; for they also are turned back, *and* are fled away together: they did not stand, because "the day of their calamity was come upon them, *and* the time of their visita-

t See chapter 48. 18.—7 Hebrew, *make these instruments of captivity.*—*u* Isaiah 20. 4.

v So Hosea 10. 11.—*w* Chapter 1. 14; 47. 2; verses 6, 10.—8 Hebrew, *bullocks of the stall.*—*x* Psalm 37. 13; chapter 50. 27.

18. As Tabor is among the mountains—The overshadowing power of Nebuchadrezzar is the point of the comparison. Tabor, though by no means a high mountain, yet stands out from the surface of the plain below with unusual boldness, and so is conspicuous in all directions. **Carmel** is a bold, lofty promontory, standing out above the Mediterranean in a most imposing manner. Both are fit types of that formidable Babylonian who had come to stand forth so loftily above the common level of the world.

19. Daughter dwelling in Egypt—That is, the inhabitants of Egypt—Egypt as to her people. **Furnish thyself**, etc.—Literally, *make for the vessels of wandering*. **Noph**—Memphis, the capital.

20. Heifer—A figure suggested by, and answering to, her god, the bull Apis. **Destruction cometh**—The original word for "destruction" occurs here only. Many meanings have been given to it, most of which are mere guesses. Gesenius, Fürst, and the Rabbins hold to "destruction." Hitzig, Schultens, Roediger, Nägelsbach, Keil, and, indeed, most modern Hebraists, give the meaning *gadfly*, and still other senses have been suggested. The Vulgate translates *goader*. Of the two senses given above as most prominent, that of *gadfly* is most generally adopted, and seems to have the best etymological support; but that of "destruction" is most obvious and

satisfactory. **22** 'The voice thereof shall go like a serpent; for they shall march with an army, and come against her with axes, as hewers of wood. **23** They shall 'cut down her forest, saith the Lord, though it cannot be searched; because they are more than "the grasshoppers, and *are* innumerable. **24** The daughter of Egypt shall be confounded; she shall be delivered into the hand of "the people of the north. **25** The Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, saith; Behold, I will punish the "multitude of "No, and Pharaoh, and Egypt, "with their gods, and their kings; even Pha-

y See Isaiah 29. 4.—*z* Isaiah 10. 34.—*a* Judges 6. 5.—*b* Chapter 1. 15.—*c* Or, *nourisher*.—*d* 10 Hebrew, *Amon*.—*e* Ezekiel 30. 14, 15, 16; Nahum 3. 8.—*f* Chapter 43. 12, 13; Ezekiel 30. 13.

satisfactory. **Cometh...cometh**—Emphatic. Cometh surely and quickly.

21. Hired men—Mercenary soldiers. **Fatted bullocks**—The soldiers mentioned in verse 9, the Ethiopians, Libyans, and Lydians, were allies; but after their destruction in the battle of Carchemish mercenaries were engaged from Asia Minor—Carians and Ionians. As we learn from Herodotus, Pharaoh-hophras took these into his pay to the number of thirty thousand, and they were settled in the fertile lands of the Delta between Bubastis and Pelusium. So pampered were they, that in the war against Cyrene he would not expose them, but sent native soldiers instead, and this cost him his crown. In describing, then, these mercenaries as "fatted bullocks" we have an extraordinary and minute faithfulness to history.

22. Voice thereof—Of Egypt. As the *serpent* disturbed in his lair by the wood choppers flees away, so Egypt shall flee before the *axes* of the Chaldean army.

23. Cut down her forest—These Chaldean wood choppers will do this, though it be most dense, (referring to this land thickly set with cities and filled with the products of material prosperity,) for they, like the *grasshoppers*, are innumerable.

25. Multitude of No—Rather, *Amon of No*, referring to the principal idol of Egypt, whose chief seat was at Thebes, here called "No."

raoh, and *all* them that trust in him: **26** ° And I will deliver them into the hand of those that seek their lives, and into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, and into the hand of his servants: and ° afterward it shall be inhabited, as in the days of old, saith the LORD.

27 ° But fear not thou, O my servant Jacob, and be not dismayed, O Israel: for, behold, I will save thee from afar off, and thy seed from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return, and be in rest and at ease, and none shall make *him* afraid. **28** Fear thou not, O Jacob my servant, saith the LORD: for I *am* with thee; for I will make a full end of all the nations whither I have driven thee: but I will not make ° a full end of thee, but correct thee in measure; yet will I ° not leave thee wholly unpunished.

° Chap. 44. 30; Ezek. 32. 11. — *f* Ezek. 29. 11, 13, 14. — *g* Isa. 41. 13, 14; 43. 5; 44. 2; chap. 30. 10, 11. — *h* Chap. 10. 24; 30. 11. — *i* Or. *not utterly cut thee off.* — *a* Chap. 25. 20; Ezek. 25. 15, 16; Zeph. 2. 4, 5. — *b* Amos 1. 6, 7, 8. — *1* Heb. *Azzah.*

MESSAGE TO ISRAEL, 27, 28.

27, 28. Fear not... Jacob—God's true Israel is not utterly cast off. Though he may bring other nations to a **full end**, yet this one has a permanent life laid in the divine purpose.

CHAPTER XLVII.

THE TITLE, 1.

1. The word of the Lord... against the Philistines — "The prophecy against Philistia was one of those contained in Jehoiakim's roll, but there are many difficulties connected with the superscription, owing to our ignorance of contemporaneous history." — *Dean Smith.* **Before that Pharaoh smote Gaza**—Probably Pharaoh-necho, after his defeat at Carchemish. The possession of this stronghold might enable him to hold in check his conquering enemy, and thus serve as a protection to his own land. With this view this prophecy would come between the battle of Carchemish and the capture of Gaza.

THE PROPHECY OF RUIN, 2-7.

2. Waters rise up—The comparison of a hostile army to an inundating flood spreading devastation over the

CHAPTER XLVII.

THE word of the LORD that came to Jeremiah the prophet ° against the Philistines, ° before that Pharaoh smote ° Gaza. **2** Thus saith the LORD; Behold, ° waters rise up ° out of the north, and shall be an overflowing flood, and shall overflow the land, and ° all that is therein; the city, and them that dwell therein: then the men shall cry, and all the inhabitants of the land shall howl. **3** At the ° noise of the stamping of the hoofs of his strong horses, at the rushing of his chariots, and at the rumbling of his wheels, the fathers shall not look back to their children for feebleness of hands; **4** Because of the day that cometh to spoil all the Philistines, and to cut off from ° Tyrus and Zidon every helper that remaineth: for the LORD will spoil the Philistines, ° the remnant of ° the country of ° Caphtor. **5** ° Bald-

° Isa. 8. 7; chap. 46. 7, 8. — *d* Chap. 1. 14; 46. 20. — *2* Heb. *the fulness thereof.* — *e* Chap. 8. 16; Nahum 3. 2. — *f* Chap. 25. 22. — *g* Ezek. 25. 16; Amos 1. 8; 9. 7. — *3* Heb. *the isle.* — *h* Gen. 10. 14. — *i* Amos 1. 7; Micah 1. 16; Zeph. 2. 4, 7; Zech. 9. 5.

land is repeatedly used. See chap. xlv, 7, 8; Isa. viii, 7, etc. This flood is said to come **out of the north**, because all those Eastern peoples enter Palestine, Philistia, and Egypt from the north. **All that is therein**—The margin is better, *all the fulness thereof*, meaning not the people, but the fruits of the earth and the wealth of its inhabitants.

3. Strong horses—War horses. **The fathers shall not look back**—Nothing could more impressively set forth the appalling danger and terror. So fearful would be the panic that the parent would not pause to see whether his children were effecting their escape.

4. The destruction is represented as falling upon the Philistines and Phenicians. This suggests an expedition directed against this whole region of country. The Philistines are called **the remnant of the country of Caphtor**. Caphtor has been, by different authors, identified with Cappadocia, Crete, Cyprus, and the Egyptian Delta. The last of these identifications is the best approved, as it is pretty well settled that the Philistines came from Egypt. **Country**—Literally, *coast land*.

ness is come upon Gaza; * Ashkelon is cut off *with* the remnant of their valley: how long wilt thou cut thyself? ■ O thou sword of the Lord, how long *will it be* ere thou be quiet? ⁴ put up thyself into thy scabbard, rest, and be still. ⁷ How can it be quiet, seeing the Lord hath given it a charge against Ashkelon, and against the sea shore? there hath he appointed it.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

A GAINST ^a Moab thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Woe unto ^b Nebo! for it is spoiled: ^c Kiria-thaim is confounded and taken: ^d Misgab is confounded and dismayed. ² *There*

k Chap. 25. 20. — *l* Chap. 16. 6; 41. 5; 48. 37. — *m* Deut. 32. 41; Ezek. 21. 3, 4, 5. — *4* Heb. *gather thyself*. — *5* Heb. *How canst thou?* — *n* Ezek. 14. 17. — *o* Micah 6. 9. — *a* Isa. 15. 16; chap. 25. 21; 27. 3; Ezek. 25. 9; Amos 2. 1, 2. — *b* Num. 32. 38; 33. 47; Isa. 15. 2.

5. **Baldness**—A sign of the deepest grief and calamity. **How long wilt thou cut thyself**—Philistia is represented as a woman tearing her own body in grief and despair.

6. **O thou sword . . . how long**—As if it may no longer be endured. The prayer is in behalf of Philistia and in behalf of humanity for respite and mercy.

7. **How can it, etc.**—A reply to the question asked in verse 6. Jehovah hath given "the sword" a commission, and it cannot be quiet until the commission be fulfilled. **Sea shore**—A suitable designation of Philistia.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

CALAMITIES IN MOAB, 1-8.

1. **Against Moab**—Rather, *concerning* "Moab." In Isaiah (chaps. xv and xvi) and Amos (chap. ii, 1-3) are prophecies against Moab. This one is, to a great extent, on the basis of that in Isaiah, which it amplifies and changes. It also contains two verses (43 and 44) from Isaiah, (xxiv, 17, 18.) **Nebo**—Not the mountain, but the city of the same name in the vicinity. **Kiria-thaim** is also a city in the same general region. **Misgab**—The *high-fortress*; probably the chief fortress of the country.

2. **No more praise of Moab**—Literally, *the boasting of Moab is gone*. In **Heshbon they have devised evil**—

shall be no more praise of Moab: in ^e Heshbon they have devised evil against it; come, and let us cut it off from *being* a nation. Also thou shalt ² be cut down, O Madmen; the sword shall ³ pursue thee. ³ A voice of crying *shall be* from Horonaim, spoiling and great destruction. ⁴ Moab is destroyed; her little ones have caused a cry to be heard. ⁵ For in the going up of Luhith ⁴ continual weeping shall go up; for in the going down of Horonaim the enemies have heard a cry of destruction. ⁶ Flee, save your lives, and be like ⁶ the ¹ heath in the wilderness.

⁷ For because thou hast trusted in thy works and in thy treasures, thou shalt

c Num. 32. 37. — *1* Or, *The high place*. — *d* Isa. 16. 14. — *e* Isa. 15. 4. — *2* Or, *be brought to silence*, Isa. 15. 1. — *3* Heb. *go after thee*. — *f* Verse 5. — *g* Isa. 15. 5. — *4* Heb. *weeping with weeping*. — *h* Chap. 51. 6. — *5* Or, *a naked tree*. — *i* Chap. 17. 6.

Heshbon was the chief city on the border, about ten Roman miles east of the Jordan, opposite Jericho. "Heshbon" literally means *devising*. Hence there is here a play upon the word. In the following clause, also, there is a similar play on the term.

3. **Horonaim**—Literally, *two caves*; a place mentioned both here and in Isa. xv, 5 in connexion with Luhith, and hence may be inferred to be near it. Of its precise location, however, we have no knowledge.

4. **Moab**—Some understand here the city Ar-Moab, of Num. xxi. 15, etc.; but this is unnecessary. It is better to take it in its ordinary sense, the name of the country. **Little ones . . . cry**—No feature of the picture could be more pathetic than these piteous cries of the children.

5. **In the going up of Luhith**—The literal reading of the last clause is, *with weeping shall go up weeping*. "Luhith" was on an eminence; and the sense is, that wave upon wave of weeping, or rank presses upon rank of weepers.

6. **Be like the heath, etc.**—See note on xvii, 6.

7. **Because thou hast trusted in thy works**—By "works" the old Versions understood fortifications, and this meaning falls in well with what we know of the life of Moab, which was famous for its fortresses and

also be taken: and ^aChemosh shall go forth into captivity *with* his ¹priests and his princes together. 8 And ^mthe spoiler shall come upon every city, and no city shall escape: the valley also shall perish, and the plain shall be destroyed, as the LORD hath spoken. 9 ^aGive wings unto Moab, that it may flee and get away: for the cities thereof shall be desolate, without any to dwell therein. 10 ^cCursed *be* he that doeth the work of the LORD ^ddeceitfully, and cursed *be* he that keepeth back his sword from blood.

11 Moab hath been at ease from his youth, and he ^phath settled on his lees, and hath not been emptied from vessel

^k Num. 21. 29; Judges 11. 24; see Isa. 46. 1, 2; chap. 43. 12. — ^l Chap. 49. 3. — ^m Chap. 6. 26; verse 18. — ⁿ Psalm 55. 6; verse 28. — ^o See Judges 5. 23; 1 Sam. 15. 3, 9; 1 Kings 20. 42. — 6 Or, *negligently*.

strongholds. **Chemosh** was the national god of Moab. If he goes into captivity, so also his worshippers.

8. **The valley of the Jordan** in Moab, and the plain or level upland stretching between the Arnon and Heshbon, shall be overrun with this destruction. The last is called repeatedly "the fields of Moab" in Ruth and elsewhere.

DEVASTATION OF MOAB, 9-15.

9. Give wings unto Moab, etc.—

The expression suggests the suddenness of the devastation. The word for "wings" elsewhere means a flower, as in Job xiv, 2.

10. **Deceitfully**—Rather, *negligently*. The meaning is, that God will require the ministers of judgment upon Moab to do thorough work.

11. The reason for these judgments is here given. Moab had remained **at ease**, and in the enjoyment of a prosperity which had vitiated her life. Hence she is compared to wine which has remained long on the **lees**—a process which improves good wine, but makes poor wine more harsh and thick. The teaching of the figure is, that if a people retain undisturbed possession of their country for a long time their characteristic national qualities will have a high development, but if they be **emptied from vessel to vessel**, the process may indeed purify them, but may also render them

to vessel, neither hath he gone into captivity: therefore his taste ⁷remained in him, and his scent is not changed.

12 Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will send unto him wanderers, that shall cause him to wander, and shall empty his vessels, and break their bottles. 13 And Moab shall be ashamed of ^aChemosh, as the house of Israel ^rwas ashamed of ^aBeth-el their confidence.

14 How say ye, ^tWe are mighty and strong men for the war? 15 ^aMoab is spoiled, and gone up *out of* her cities, and ^bhis chosen young men are ^cgone down to the slaughter, saith ^wthe King, whose name is The LORD of hosts.

^p Zeph. 1. 12 — ⁷ Heb. *stood*. — ^q Judges 11. 24; 1 Kings 11. 7. — ^r Hosea 10. 6. — ^s 1 Kings 12. 29. — ^t Isa. 16. 6. — ^u Verses 8, 9, 18. — 8 Heb. *the choice of*. — ^v Chap. 50. 27. — ^w Chap. 46. 18; 51. 57.

light, weak, and insipid. What is true of national life is true also of individual life; and what is true of life in its lowest conditions applies also to life in its highest aspects. (See, on this last, the most ingenious and admirable sermon of Dr. Horace Bushnell on *The Necessity of Spiritual Dislodgments*.)

12. **Wanderers**—As is patent on the very surface, and as all expositors agree, this word is a wrong translation, and misleading. Luther renders *tapsters*; Ewald, *overturners*; Nägelsbach, Smith, Noyes, and others, *tilters*. Keil's rendering expresses well the exact sense. *I will send him those who pour out, and they shall pour him out*. The wine in the earthen vessels of the time could be poured off only by tilting the vessel instead of draining it off, as in a wooden vessel, by a hole for the purpose.

13. **As the house of Israel was ashamed of Beth-el**—That is, of their golden calf at Beth-el.

15. **Gone up... gone down**—An evident antithesis. The words **out of**, inserted by the translators in this verse, are unjustifiable and misleading. The simplest translation is, *her cities have gone up*, perhaps in smoke and flame. Another rendering is preferred by Keil, and is, perhaps, barely defensible, which leaves the subject of the verb indeterminate: *they go up to his cities*. The enemy ascends to

16 The calamity of Moab is near to come, and his affliction hasteth fast. **17** All ye that are about him, bemoan him; and all ye that know his name, say, ^aHow is the strong staff broken, and the beautiful rod! **18** ^bThou daughter that dost inhabit ^cDibon, come down from thy glory, and sit in thirst; for ^dthe spoiler of Moab shall come upon thee, and he shall destroy thy strong holds. **19** O ^einhabitant of ^fArœer, stand by the way, and espy; ask him that fleeth, and her that escapeth, and say, What is done? **20** Moab is confounded; for it is broken down: ^ghowl and cry; tell ye it in ^hArnon, that Moab is spoiled. **21** And judgment is come upon the plain country; upon Holon, and upon Jahazah, and upon Mephaath, **22** And upon Dibon, and upon Nebo, and upon Beth-diblathaim, **23** And upon Kiriathaim, and upon Beth-gamul, and upon Beth-meon, **24** And upon ⁱKeriôth, and upon Bozrah, and upon all the cities of the land of Moab, far or near. **25** ^jThe horn of Moab is cut off, and his ^karm is broken, saith the LORD. **26** ^lMake ye him drunken; for he magnified himself against the LORD: Moab also shall wallow in his vomit,

^a See Isa. 9. 4; 14. 4, 5. — ^y Isa. 47. 1: chap. 46. 19. — ^s Num. 21. 30; Isa. 15. 2. — ^a Verse 8. — ^b Heb. *inhabitant*. — ^c Deut. 2. 36. — ^c 1 Sam. 4. 13, 16. — ^d Isa. 16. 7. — ^e See Num. 21. 13. — ^f Verse 8. — ^g Verse 41; Amos 2. 2. — ^h Psa. 75. 10. — ⁱ See Ezek. 30. 21. — ^k Chap. 25. 15, 27. — ^l Zeph. 2. 8.

the cities: the soldiers go down to slaughter.

PARTICULARS OF MOAB'S RUIN, 16-25.

17. Strong staff. . . beautiful rod—The power and the splendour of Moab have departed.

18. Thou daughter that dost inhabit Dibon—Literally, *thou that dost inhabit, daughter of Dibon*. "Daughter" may be the subject or object of the verb. **Sit in thirst**—In the desert-land, in contrast with her accustomed place near the Arnon in a beautiful plain, where to this day there is a well by the wayside hewn out of the rock.

19. Arœer—A town on the northern bank of the Arnon, once belonging to Ammon, but now, apparently, to Moab.

21. Holon. . . Jahazah, etc.—This is a list of towns and cities in Moab, most of which are mentioned elsewhere, but this first one, *Holon*, is found nowhere else.

and he also shall be in derision. **27** For ^mwas not Israel a derision unto thee? ⁿwas he found among thieves? for since thou spakest of him, thou ^oskippedst for joy. **28** O ye that dwell in Moab, leave the cities, and ^pdwell in the rock, and be like ^qthe dove that maketh her nest in the sides of the hole's mouth. **29** We have heard the ^rpride of Moab, (he is exceeding proud,) his loftiness, and his arrogancy, and his pride, and the haughtiness of his heart. **30** I know his wrath, saith the LORD; but it shall not be so; ^shis lies shall not so effect it. **31** Therefore ^twill I howl for Moab, and I will cry out for all Moab; *mine heart shall mourn for the men of Kirheres*. **32** ^uO vine of Sibmah, I will weep for thee with the weeping of Jazer: thy plants are gone over the sea, they reach even to the sea of Jazer: the spoiler is fallen upon thy summer fruits and upon thy vintage. **33** And ^vjoy and gladness is taken from the plentiful field, and from the land of Moab; and I have caused wine to fail from the winepresses: none shall tread with shouting; *their shouting shall be no shouting*. **34** ^wFrom the cry of Heshbon even unto Elealeh, and even unto Jahaz, have they uttered

^m See chap. 2. 26. — 10 Or, *moredest thyself*. — ⁿ Psa. 55. 6, 7; verse 9. — ^o Sol. Song 2. 14. — ^p Isa. 16. 6, etc. — ^q Isa. 16. 6: chap. 50. 36. — ^r 11 Or, *those on whom he stayeth* (Heb. *his bars*) *do not right*. — ^s Isa. 15. 5; 16. 7, 11. — ^t Isa. 16. 8, 9. — ^u Isa. 16. 10; Joel 1. 12. — ^v Isa. 15. 4, 5, 6.

THE CONTRAST, 26-47.

26. Make ye him drunken, etc.—This commission is addressed to those who execute God's vengeance on Moab. For his haughtiness and arrogance are appointed shame and disgrace. Moab is a laughing-stock because Israel was a derision to her, as is said in verse 27.

27. Was he found among thieves—The second member of this verse should not be separated from the third, *that as often as thou speakest of him thou waggest thine head*.

28. Leave the cities, etc.—Leave the cities and take refuge in the inaccessible rocks. **The sides**—Literally, *the farther sides*. "The wild rock pigeon invariably selects deep ravines for its nesting and roosting places." — *Tristram*.

29-33. Substantially taken from Isa. xvi, 6-10.

34. Heshbon...unto Elealeh—This

their voice, * from Zoar *even* unto Horonaim, as a heifer of three years old: for the waters also of Nimrim shall be ¹² desolate. **35** Moreover I will cause to cease in Moab, saith the LORD, * him that offereth in the high places, and him that burneth incense to his gods. **36** Therefore * mine heart shall sound for Moab like pipes, and mine heart shall sound like pipes for the men of Kir-heres: because * the riches that he hath gotten are perished. **37** For * every head shall be bald, and every beard ¹³ clipped: upon all the hands shall be cuttings, and * upon the loins sackcloth. **38** There shall be lamentation generally upon all the housetops of Moab, and in the streets thereof: for I have broken Moab like * a vessel wherein is no pleasure, saith the LORD. **39** They shall howl, saying, How is it broken down! how hath Moab turned the ¹⁴ back with shame! so shall Moab be a derision and a dismaying to all them about him. **40** For thus saith the LORD; Behold, * he shall fly as an eagle, and shall * spread his wings over Moab. **41** * ¹⁵ Kerioth is taken, and the

strong holds are surprised, and * the mighty men's hearts in Moab at that day shall be as the heart of a woman in her pangs. **42** And Moab shall be destroyed * from being a people, because he hath magnified himself against the LORD. **43** ¹⁶ Fear, and the pit, and the snare, shall be upon thee, O inhabitant of Moab, saith the LORD. **44** He that fleeth from the fear shall fall into the pit; and he that getteth up out of the pit shall be taken in the snare: for ¹⁷ I will bring upon it, *even* upon Moab, the year of their visitation, saith the LORD. **45** They that fled stood under the shadow of Heshbon because of the force: but * a fire shall come forth out of Heshbon, and a flame from the midst of Sihon, and ¹⁸ shall devour the corner of Moab, and the crown of the head of the ¹⁹ tumultuous ones. **46** ²⁰ Woe be unto thee, O Moab! the people of Chemosh perisheth: for thy sons are taken ²¹ captives, and thy daughters captives.

47 Yet will I bring again the captivity of Moab ²² in the latter days, saith the LORD. Thus far is the judgment of Moab.

* Isaiah 15, 5, 6; verse 5. — ¹² Heb. *desolations*. — ¹³ Isa. 15, 2; 16, 12. — ¹⁴ Isa. 15, 5; 16, 11. — ¹⁵ Isa. 15, 7. — ¹⁶ Isa. 15, 2, 3; chap. 47, 5. — ¹⁷ Heb. *diminished*. — ¹⁸ Gen. 37, 34. — ¹⁹ b Chap. 22, 28. — ²⁰ Heb. *neck*. — ²¹ c Dent. 28, 49; chap. 49, 22; Dan. 7, 4; Hosea 8, 1; Hab. 1, 8. — ²² d Isa. 6, 8.

^e Verse 24. — ¹⁵ Or, *The cities*. — ^f Isa. 13, 8; 21, 3; chap. 30, 6; 49, 22, 24; 50, 43; 51, 30; Micah 4, 9. — ^g Psa. 83, 4; Isa. 7, 8. — ^h Isa. 24, 17, 18. — ⁱ See chap. 11, 23. — ^k Num. 21, 28. — ^l Num. 24, 17. — ¹⁶ Heb. *children of noise*. — ^m Num. 21, 29. — ¹⁷ Heb. *in captivity*. — ⁿ Chap. 49, 6, 39.

verse is based on Isa. xv, 4. Heshbon and Elealeh are about two miles distant from each other. Their ruins are still visible. It is not impossible that a shout of wailing on one height may be heard on the other, and yet this supposition is not necessary to the understanding of the passage. **As a heifer of three years old**—The force of this comparison is not very evident. If it embraced not a single locality, but Moab as a whole, it would be more intelligible as suggesting a land which had never been brought under the yoke, subjugated. Keil regards the original as a proper name, and translates from *Zoar as far as Horonaim and the third Eglath*. He explains the ordinal on the theory that there were three places of the same name which were distinguished. This, though conjectural, may be accepted as not without value. **Waters ... of Nimrim**—This “Nimrim” cannot be the Nimrah of Num. xxxii, 3, 36, and Josh. xiii, 27, for they must be too

far north for this verse. It must be some well watered district of Moab.

35. Cause to cease... in the high places—As the last sign and proof of national desolation.

36. Pipes—In Isaiah it is *harp*. Jeremiah says “pipes” for the plaintive and dirge-like quality of the music.

37. Head... bald, ... beard clipped, upon... the hands... cuttings, and upon the loins sackcloth, are signs of abject grief and desolation.

40. He (Nebuchadrezzar) shall fly as an eagle—So strong and swift shall be his coming.

41. Kerioth—The capital. **Is taken**—Captured. The use of the present term denotes the certainty of the event predicted.

45. Under the shadow of Heshbon—Why do we find fugitives in Heshbon, since the enemy comes from the north? They came from the environs and sought refuge in this fortified town, but a fire devoured them.

CHAPTER XLIX.

CONCERNING ¹ the Ammonites, thus saith the Lord: Hath Israel no sons? hath he no heir? why *then* doth ² their king inherit ³ Gad, and his people dwell in his cities? **2** Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will cause an alarm of war to be heard in ⁴ Rabbah of the Ammonites; and it shall be a desolate heap, and her daughters shall be burned with fire: then shall Israel be heir unto them that were his heirs, saith the Lord. **3** Howl,

¹ Or, *Against*.—*a* Ezek. 21. 28; 25. 2; Amos 1. 13; Zeph. 2. 8, 9.—² Or, *Melcom*.—^b Amos 1. 13.—^c Ezek. 25. 5; Amos 1. 14.—^d Isa. 32. 11; chap. 4. 8; 6. 26.

CHAPTER XLIX.

PROPHECY AGAINST AMMON, 1-6.

1. Concerning the Ammonites—

In descent and character the Ammonites were twin people with the Moabites, but probably less civilized, being largely nomadic, while the Moabites were a more settled people. The Ammonites laid claim to a portion of the territory which Sihon, king of the Amorites, had wrested from them, and which at his death was won by the Israelites, and were constantly seeking to recover it from the children of God to whom it had been apportioned. After the Gileadites were carried into captivity by Tiglath-pileser, the Ammonites succeeded to much of their territory, and from that time became more formidable than ever. **Hath Israel no sons**, etc.—This is a question of reproach against the Ammonites, who had taken possession of Gilead as though the territory did not belong to the Gadites. **Their king**—The leading ancient Versions—the Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate—understand by the original here a proper name—Melcom, the chief deity of the Ammonites, as does also the margin of the English Bible. The sense is not materially affected, though it must be confessed that it is more impressive to understand Melcom here as standing in the same relation as Chemosh in the prophecy concerning Moab. (See chap. xlviii, 13.) **Gad**—The territory apportioned by Moses to this tribe. **Inherit**—Rather, *take possession of*.

2. Rabbah—Its full name was

O Heshbon, for Ai is spoiled: cry, ye daughters of Rabbah, ^dgird you with sackcloth; lament, and run to and fro by the hedges; for ³their king shall go into captivity, and his ^epriests and his princes together. **4** Wherefore gloriest thou in the valleys, ^fthy flowing valley, O ^gbacksliding daughter? that trusted in her treasures, ^hsaying, Who shall come unto me? **5** Behold, I will bring a fear upon thee, saith the Lord God of hosts, from all those that be about thee; and ye shall be driven out every man right

³ Or, *Melcom*, 1 Kings 11. 5, 33.—^e Chapter 48. 7; Amos 1. 15.—⁴ Or, *thy valley floweth away*.—^f Chapter 3. 14; 7. 24.—^g Chapter 21. 13.

“The great city of the sons of Ammon,” though it was usually called simply Rabbah—the Great. Later it was called Philadelphia, after Ptolemy Philadelphus. It was situated on or near the brook Jabbok. **Her daughters**—The unwalled villages dependent on her. **Be heir**—The tables will be turned. The Ammonites have taken possession of the Israelites’ territory, but shall be driven from it.

3. Heshbon was formerly the residence of Sihon, king of the Amorites, but it seems at this time to have been in possession of the Ammonites. No city **Ai** is known to have been in this region, and there is serious, but certainly no insuperable, difficulty in this fact. Some conjectures of change in the text have been made, but they should not be entertained. We have no list of Ammonite cities, and so no presumption against the existence of such a city arises from our ignorance. **Hedges**—Some understand sheep-folds, but this is an undue limitation of the original word. Enclosures, embracing sheep-folds, vineyards, etc., are meant. **Their king**—Margin, *Melcom*, the name of their tutelary divinity. That this is right the mention of **his priests** almost demonstrates.

4. Valleys—The territory of the Ammonites is largely made up of elevated tablelands, crossed by fertile valleys made by streams which make their way to the Jordan. The singular, **thy flowing valley**, probably may have reference to that one in which Rabbah was situated.

5. Every man right forth—In the

forth; and none shall gather up him that wandereth. **6** And ^hafterward I will bring again the captivity of the children of Ammon, saith the LORD.

7 ⁱConcerning Edom, thus saith the LORD of hosts; ^kIs wisdom no more in Teman? ^lIs counsel perished from the prudent? is their wisdom vanished? **8** ^mFlee ye, ⁿturn back, dwell deep, O inhabitants of ^oDedan; for I will bring the calamity of Esau upon him, the time *that* I will visit him. **9** If ^pgrapegatherers

come to thee, would they not leave *some* gleaning grapes? if thieves by night, they will destroy ^qtill they have enough.

10 ^rBut I have made Esau bare, I have uncovered his secret places, and he shall not be able to hide himself: his seed is spoiled, and his brethren, and his neighbours, and ^she *is* not. **11** Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve *them* alive; and let thy widows trust in me. **12** For thus saith the LORD: Behold, ^tthey whose judgment *was* not to drink

^h So verse 39; chap. 48. 47.—ⁱ Ezek. 25. 12; Amos 1. 11.—^k Obad. 8.—^l See Isa. 19. 11.—^m Verse 30.—ⁿ Or, *they are turned back*.

ⁿ Chap. 25. 23.—^o Obad. 5.—^p 6 Heb. *their sufficiency*.—^q Mal. 1. 3.—^r Isa. 17. 14.—^s Chap. 25. 29; Obad. 16.

most precipitate flight, looking neither to the right nor left.

6. Afterward I will bring again the captivity of the children of Ammon—They shall not be utterly exterminated; but again their fortunes shall revive, as in the case of Moab, chap. xlviii, 47. From Neh. iv, 1, etc., we learn that they kept up their hostile spirit against the Jews; this was true in the Maccabean age. They disappear from history early in the Christian age.

PROPHECY AGAINST EDMOM, 7-22.

7. Concerning Edom—This prophecy is based on the first nine verses of Obadiah, but with many changes. The country of Edom held a relation to the kingdom of Judah not unlike that which Moab held to Israel. It extended from Moab and the Dead Sea, on the west to the Mediterranean, on the east to the desert, thus skirting the entire southern boundary of Judah. There are signs of a peculiar antipathy between the descendants of Esau and those of Jacob. This was so strong at the time of the giving of the law as to require special enactment, and hence that somewhat singular clause inserted in the Mosaic law, "Thou shalt not abhor an Edomite, for he is thy brother." Even that most sad and plaintive of all the psalms, commencing, "By the rivers of Babylon," etc., does not close without giving evidence of the same state of feeling: "Remember, O Lord, the children of Edom in the day of Jerusalem; who said, Rase it, rase it, even to the foundation thereof." And hence this name of Edom came to be

a generic one for the enemies of the Church; so that when the divine Conqueror is described, it is in such language as this: "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah?" There are many prophecies directed against Edom, but of only one of these does Jeremiah make use, namely, that in Obadiah, already specified. **Teman** was in the north-eastern part of Idumea, but is here put for the whole country. It was the home of the wise Eliphaz of the book of Job, and hence, probably, was famed for wisdom; so that here is doubtless somewhat of irony.

8. Dwell deep—Retire into the depth of the desert—the hidden and inaccessible places, where the enemy may not find and destroy you. **Esau** was the ancestor of the Edomites.

9, 10. If grapegatherers come... leave some gleaning—"Grape gatherers" and even **thieves** leave something behind them, but the Chaldeans will strip them utterly bare. **His seed**—His family. **His brethren**—The related peoples who were intermingled with them—the Simeonites, Horites, etc., etc.

11. Thy fatherless children, I will preserve—God's mercy then, is not taken away from them, but restrained. In this there is an impressive intimation of their swiftly coming helplessness and desolation, and at the same time of God's pity and care.

12. They whose judgment, etc.—Namely, the Israelites, who, in falling under the judgments of God, had departed utterly from their proper normal experience. "And if the right-

of the cup have assuredly drunken; and art thou he *that* shall altogether go unpunished? thou shalt not go unpunished, but thou shalt surely drink of it. **13** For ^a I have sworn by myself, saith the LORD, that ^b Bozrah shall become a desolation, a reproach, a waste, and a curse; and all the cities thereof shall be perpetual wastes. **14** I have heard a ^c rumour from the LORD, and an ambassador is sent unto the heathen, *saying*, Gather ye together, and come against her, and rise up to the battle. **15** For, lo, I will make thee small among the heathen, and despised among men. **16** Thy terribleness hath deceived thee, and the pride of thine heart, O thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, that holdest the height of the hill: ^d though thou shouldst make thy ^e nest as high as the eagle, ^f I will bring thee down from thence, saith the LORD. **17** Also Edom

^a Gen. 22. 16; Isa. 45. 23; Amos 6. 8. — ^b Isa. 34. 6; ^c ¹ Job 39. 27. — ^d ² Amos 9. 2. — ^e ³ Chap. 18. 16; 50. 13.

eous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?"

Have...drunken — Rather, *will certainly drink*.

13. Bozrah—At that time the capital of the Edomites. It was situated on an eminence south of the Dead Sea, on the site of the present village of Buseirah. It is of course not to be identified with the Bozrah of chap. xlviii, 24, which was of Moab.

14. Rumour—Tidings. **Ambassador**—Herald.

15. Heathen—The nations.

16. Thy terribleness—The terror which thou dost inspire. The original word is used nowhere else, and has been variously translated, but this sense stands most fully commended. **Dwellest in the clefts of the rock... holdest the height of the hill... nest as high as the eagle.** These very characteristic and intelligible descriptions apply not only to Bozrah, but especially to Petra, which was literally cut in the rocks.

18. As...Sodom and Gomorrah—Not the manner, but the fact, and the utterness of the overthrow is the point of comparison. As Edom was in the immediate neighborhood of Sodom the comparison was natural. **No man... son of man**—This language is uni-

shall be a desolation: ^a every one that goeth by it shall be astonished, and shall hiss at all the plagues thereof. **18** ^b As in the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah and the neighbour *cities* thereof, saith the LORD, no man shall abide there, neither shall a son of man dwell in it. **19** ^c Behold, he shall come up like a lion from ^d the swelling of Jordan against the habitation of the strong; but I will suddenly make him run away from her: and who is a chosen *man*, that I may appoint over her? for ^e who is like me? and who will ^f appoint me the time? and ^g who is that shepherd that will stand before me? **20** ^h Therefore hear the counsel of the LORD, that he hath taken against Edom; and his purposes, that he hath purposed against the inhabitants of Teman: Surely the least of the flock shall draw them out; surely he shall make their habitations desolate with

^a Gen. 19. 25; Deut. 29. 23; chap. 50. 40; Amos 4. 11. — ^b ¹ Chap. 50. 44, etc. — ^c ² Chap. 12. 5. — ^d ³ Exod. 15. 11. — ^e ⁴ Or, *content me in judgment*. — ^f ⁵ Job 41. 10. — ^g ⁶ Chap. 50. 45.

versal, and not limited to the Idumeans, as Fausset claims without any warrant.

19. He shall come up like a lion—This verse is bold, effective, and perfectly intelligible in its general imagery. There are, however, in it difficulties both lexical and grammatical, which have led to different translations. These, for the most part, arise not from the words themselves, but from their relations to each other and to the whole. Without discussing minutely the various points involved, we must be content with indicating the translation which seems to us to stand most fully commended, and at the same time gives a sense most appropriate and serviceable: *Behold, he shall come up like a lion from the pride of Jordan against the enduring habitation; but in a moment I will drive him away from it, and will appoint over it him who is chosen; for who is like me, and who will summon me (to trial)? And what shepherd shall stand before me?*

20. The least of the flock shall draw them out—The latter part of this verse is not intelligibly rendered in the Authorized Version. It should be, *They shall worry them, the feeble ones of the flock; surely he shall lay waste their habitation over them.*

them. **21** ¹The earth is moved at the noise of their fall; at the cry the noise thereof was heard in the ²Red sea. **22** Behold, ³he shall come up and fly as the eagle, and spread his wings over Bozrah: and at that day shall the heart of the mighty men of Edom be as the heart of a woman in her pangs.

23 ⁴Concerning Damascus. Hamath is confounded, and Arpad; for they have heard evil tidings: they are ⁵faint-hearted; ⁶there is sorrow ¹⁰on the sea; it cannot be quiet. **24** Damascus is waxed feeble, and turneth herself to flee, and fear hath seized on her: ⁸anguish and sorrows have taken her, as a woman in travail. **25** How is ¹the city of praise not left, the city of my joy! **26** ¹⁰Therefore her young men shall fall in her streets, and all the men of war shall be cut off in that day, saith the Lord of hosts. **27** And I will kindle a ¹¹fire in the wall of Damascus, and it shall consume the palaces of Ben-hadad.

28 ¹²Concerning Kedar, and concern-

¹Chap. 50. 46. — ⁸Heb. *Weedy sea*. — ⁹Chap. 4. 13; 48. 40, 41. — ¹⁰Isa. 17. 1; 37. 13; Amos 1. 3; Zech. 9. 1, 2. — ⁹Heb. *melted*. — ¹¹Isa. 57. 20. — ¹⁰Or, *as on the sea*. — ¹¹Isa. 13. 8; chap. 4. 31; 6. 24; 30. 6; 48. 41; verse 22. — ¹²Chap. 33. 9; 51. 41. — ¹³Chap. 50. 30; 51. 4. — ¹⁴Amos 1. 4. — ¹⁵Isa. 21. 13.

21. The earth is moved—Better, *At the noise of their fall earth quakes; the cry, to the Red Sea, the sound is heard.* **Red sea**—Literally, *Sea of sedge*—its ordinary designation. The appellation comes from the sedge on its banks.

22. Come up... as the eagle—Not as the eagle rises in the air, but as an enemy to the attack.

23. Concerning Damascus—The kingdom of Damascus was destroyed by Tiglath-pileser, but the city itself remained, and was probably at this time the most important center of influence in all Syria. This district of country could hardly fail to be involved in the troubles which are the burden of this book, and Damascus is given a place in this picture as the most conspicuous and representative city. **Hamath**—This place was the capital of Northern Aram, and **Arpad** is usually associated with it. **Sorrow on the sea**—Among the multitude of people. Some prefer *sorrow to the sea*, but this leaves the following sentence unintelligible.

28. Concerning Kedar—In chap.

ing the kingdoms of Hazor, which Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon shall smite, thus saith the Lord; Arise ye, go up to Kedar, and spoil ¹the men of the cast. **29** Their ²tents and their flocks shall they take away: they shall take to themselves their curtains, and all their vessels, and their camels; and they shall cry unto them, ³Fear is on every side.

30 ⁴Flee, ⁵get you far off, dwell deep, O ye inhabitants of Hazor, saith the Lord; for Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon hath taken counsel against you, and hath conceived a purpose against you. **31** Arise, get you up unto ⁶the ⁷wealthy nation, that dwelleth without care, saith the Lord, which have neither gates nor bars, ⁸which ⁹dwell alone. **32** And their camels shall be a booty, and the multitude of their cattle a spoil: and I will ¹⁰scatter into all winds ¹¹them ¹²that are ¹³in the utmost corners; and I will bring their calamity from all sides thereof, saith the Lord. **33** And Hazor

¹Judges 6. 3; Job 1. 3. — ²Psa. 120. 5. — ³Chap. 6. 25; 46. 5. — ⁴Verse 8. — ⁵Heb. *flit greatly*. — ⁶Ezek. 38. 11. — ⁷Or, *that is at ease*. — ⁸Num. 23. 9; Deut. 33. 28; Micah 7. 14. — ⁹Verse 36; Ezek. 5. 10. — ¹⁰Chap. 9. 26; 25. 23. — ¹¹Heb. *cut off into corners*, or, *that have the corners of their hair polled*.

ii, 10, "Kedar" is evidently a general name for the people of the East; here the name is somewhat more definitely restricted to the nomadic peoples of Arabia. **Kingdoms of Hazor**—"Hazor" is kindred with *hazer*—an un-walled village. Here the term is used to designate those Arabians who dwell in villages. **Go up to Kedar** is addressed to the enemy.

29. Tents and flocks, curtains and vessels and camels make up the wealth of nomads. By "curtains" are meant the hangings of the tent; and by "vessels," the simple cooking utensils of these wanderers.

30. Dwell deep—See on verse 8.

31. Wealthy nation—Rather, *nation at ease*. **Neither gates nor bars**—A truthful and graphic picture of these dwellers in tents, who not only have no city walls, but they are also without houses. **Dwell alone**—An important additional feature.

32. Utmost corners—All shall be sought out and dispersed.

33. Hazor represents the settled tribes, as Kedar does the nomadic.

shall * be a dwelling for dragons, and a desolation for ever: † there shall no man abide there, nor any son of man dwell in it.

34 The word of the LORD that came to Jeremiah the prophet against * Elam in the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah king of Judah, saying, **35** Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Behold, I will break * the bow of Elam, the chief of their might. **36** And upon Elam will I bring the four winds from the four quarters of heaven, and † will scatter them toward all those winds; and there shall be no nation whither the outcasts of Elam shall not come. **37** For I will cause Elam to be dismayed before their

enemies, and before them that seek their life: and I will bring evil upon them, even my fierce anger, saith the LORD; † and I will send the sword after them, till I have consumed them: **38** And I will † set my throne in Elam, and will destroy from thence the king and the princes, saith the LORD.

39 But it shall come to pass * in the latter days, that I will bring again the captivity of Elam, saith the LORD.

CHAPTER L.

THE word that the LORD spake † against Babylon and against the land of the Chaldeans † by Jeremiah the prophet. **2** Declare ye among the na-

* Chap. 9. 11; 10. 22; Mal. 1. 3.—† Verse 18.
—‡ Chap. 25. 25.—§ See Isa. 22. 6.—|| Verse 32.—¶ Chap. 9. 16; 48. 2.

These shall become the habitation of *jacks*, (not *dragons*.)

34. The word... against Elam—“Elam” was a region to the south-east of Babylonia on the Persian Gulf, inhabited by a Shemitic people. This region comes prominently into history a hundred years later; but in the time of Jeremiah we have little definite information as to its civil history and relations. It can hardly be doubted that it was at one time embraced within the limits of the Assyrian empire, as it was later in the Chaldean. But it is probable that it maintained, more or less, an independent national life, which was affected to a greater or less degree by the agitations and disturbances of this period. This prophecy does not sustain a close relation to those preceding, bearing, as it does, a later date, and referring to a people very distant from those already mentioned. There is observable, however, a geographical order in this group of prophecies. Moab, Ammon, Edom, Damascus, Kedar and Hazor, Elam.

35. Bow of Elam—The national weapon of the Elamites.

36. Four winds from the four quarters—Truthful description of a terrific storm, which, in its destructive fury, seems to come from all quarters at once. **Outcasts of Elam**—A singular error has crept into the written text, consisting in substituting a *vav* (ו) for a *yodh* (י) so that the actual reading is *outcasts of eternity*. It

§ See chap. 43. 10.—¶ Chap. 48. 47: verse 6.
—|| Isa. 13. 1; 21. 1; 47. 1.—1 Heb. *by the hand of Jeremiah*.

is perfectly obvious that it is a mere mistake, and the Versions so treat it. The only value it has, however, is to illustrate the possibility of a case in which the internal evidence as to a reading may quite overbear the external; and this gives some protection to conjectural emendations in other places.

38. I will set my throne—Of judgment, to punish **king and princes**, (not, as in the text, “the king and the princes.”)

39. In the latter days—The end of days; the Messianic reign. The beginning of this promise was seen at Pentecost.

CHAPTER L.

THE TITLE, 1.

1. The word... against Babylon—Rather, *concerning*. **By Jeremiah**—Literally, as in the margin, *by the hand of Jeremiah*, suggesting not a spoken, but a written, message. The **and** should be omitted, and so **land of the Chaldeans** is simply an appositive of Babylon, which is thus shown to be not the city but the land.

The circle of the nations is completed in this prophecy against Babylon, which is much the most elaborate of all, containing one hundred verses. The genuineness of the passage is assailed by several critics on such grounds as these: 1) Elsewhere Jeremiah is the friend of the Chaldeans; here he is their enemy,

tions, and publish, and ^aset up a standard; publish, and conceal not: say, Babylon is taken, ^bBel is confounded, Merodach is broken in pieces; ^cher idols are confounded, her images are broken in pieces. **3** ^dFor out of the north there cometh up ^ea nation against her, which shall make her land desolate, and none shall dwell therein: they shall remove, they shall depart, both man and beast.

4 In those days, and in that time, saith the LORD, the children of Israel shall come, ^fthey and the children of

Judah together, ^ggoing and weeping: they shall go, ^hand seek the LORD their God. **5** They shall ask the way to Zion with their faces thitherward, *saying*, Come, and let us join ourselves to the LORD in ⁱa perpetual covenant *that shall not be forgotten*. **■** My people hath been ^klost sheep: their shepherds have caused them to go astray, they have turned them away *on* ^lthe mountains: they have gone from mountain to hill, they have forgotten their ^mresting place. **7** All that found them have ⁿdevoured

² Heb. *lift up*. — ^b Isa. 46. 1; chap. 51. 44. — ^c See chap. 43. 12, 13. — ^d Chap. 51. 48. — ^e Isa. 13. 17, 18, 20; verses 39, 40. — ^f Hosea 1. 11. — ^g Ezra 3. 12, 13; Psa. 126. 5, 6; chap. 31. 9;

Zech. 12. 10. — ^h Hosea 3. 5. — ⁱ Chap. 31. 31, etc.; 32. 40. — ^k Isa. 53. 6; verse 17; 1 Peter 2. 25. — ^l Chap. 2. 20; 3. 6, 23. — ^m Heb. *place to lie down in*. — ⁿ Psa. 79. 7.

and thirsts for their overthrow: 2) The style is repetitious. 3) New words and thoughts, foreign to Jeremiah, are introduced. 4) It shows a striking resemblance to certain passages in Isaiah. 5) It displays an intimate knowledge of Babylonian topography and customs.

We reply: 1) Jeremiah indeed recognises the Chaldeans as the ministers of God's justice, but still this does not change the fact that they are the enemies of the theocracy; and Jeremiah's loyalty as a Jew and a worshipper of the Most High cannot be questioned. 2) That the style contains repetitions is eminently characteristic of Jeremiah, the warmth of whose emotional nature continually leads him to dwell on and to repeat matters of supreme interest. 3) There is no proof that new words and thoughts, novel to Jeremiah, have been introduced. 4) The introduction of passages from other prophets, such as Isaiah, Obadiah, and Nahum, has already been illustrated; and in this Jeremiah is simply consistent with himself. 5) The knowledge of Babylon is only of such general character as every intelligent Jew must have possessed.

In favor of the genuineness of this passage we may note—1) Its own distinct and formal claim, so that if it be not genuine it is a base forgery. 2) The style is characteristically Jeremiah's. 3) The local and historical allusions are fully in harmony with this view. One illustrative passage, the fifth verse, has been repeatedly

quoted: "They shall ask the way to Zion with their faces thitherward." The exact reading is *hitherward*, showing that the writer was at Jerusalem.

THE FALL OF BABYLON AND DELIVERANCE OF ISRAEL, 2-10.

2. Set up (rather, as the margin, *lift up*) **a standard**—As a means of spreading the good news. **Bel...** **Merodach**—These are not two separate deities, but rather two names suggesting two aspects of one deity. "Bel" is the Aramean divinity answering to the Phenician Baal, the Phenician and Babylonian Jupiter. "Merodach" is the same, as the tutelard god of Babylon.

3. Out of the north—The Medes were the destroyers of Babylon, and came from the northwest. **They shall remove**, etc.—Literally, *from man to beast they are fled, they are gone*.

4. In those days, etc.—When Babylon shall have fallen, Israel and Judah, reunited in their common penitence and their common joy, shall come back again, seeking the Lord their God, and asking the way to Zion.

5. Thitherward—Rather, *hitherward*, showing the standpoint. **Perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten**—A repetition which suggests the contrast between this new covenant and the old one which they had broken.

6. Lost sheep—So they have the most urgent reasons for seeking again the fold. **They have forgotten their resting place**—Alas, how universally

them: and ^atheir adversaries said, ^oWe offend not, because they have sinned against the LORD, ^pthe habitation of justice, even the LORD, ^qthe hope of their fathers. 8 ^rRemove out of the midst of Babylon, and go forth out of the land of the Chaldeans, and be as the he goats before the flocks.

9 ^sFor, lo, I will raise and cause to come up against Babylon an assembly of great nations from the north country: and they shall ^tset themselves in array against her; from thence she shall be taken: their arrows *shall be* as of a mighty ^uexpert man; ^vnone shall return in vain. 10 And Chaldea shall be a spoil: ^wall that spoil her shall be satisfied, saith the LORD. 11 ^xBecause ye were glad, because ye rejoiced, O ye destroyers of mine heritage, because ye are

grown ^afat ^xas the heifer at grass, and ^bbellow as bulls; 12 Your mother shall be sore confounded; she that bare you shall be ashamed: behold, the hindermost of the nations *shall be* a wilderness, a dry land, and a desert. 13 Because of the wrath of the LORD it shall not be inhabited, ^ybut it shall be wholly desolate: ^zevery one that goeth by Babylon shall be astonished, and hiss at all her plagues. 14 ^aPut yourselves in array against Babylon round about: all ye ^bthat bend the bow, shoot at her, spare no arrows: for she hath sinned against the LORD. 15 Shout against her round about: she hath ^cgiven her hand: her foundations are fallen, ^dher walls are thrown down: for ^eit is the vengeance of the LORD: take vengeance upon her; ^fas she hath done, do unto her. 16 Cut

ⁿ Chap. 40. 2, 3; Zech. 11. 5. — ^o See chap. 2. 3; Dan. 9. 16. — ^p Psa. 90. 1; 91. 1. — ^q Psa. 22. 4. — ^r Isa. 48. 20; chap. 51. 6, 45; Zech. 2. 6, 7; Rev. 18. 4. — ^s Chap. 15. 14; 51. 27; verses 3, 41. — ^t Verses 14, 29. — ^u 4 Or, *destroyer*. — ^v 2 Sam. 1. 22. — ^w Rev. 17. 16. — ^x Isa. 47. 6.

5 Heb. *big*, or, *corpulent*. — ⁿ Hosea 10. 11. — ^o Or, *neigh as steeds*. — ^p Chap. 25. 12. — ^q Chap. 49. 17. — ^r Ver. 9; chap. 51. 2. — ^s Chap. 49. 35; ver. 29. — ^t 1 Chron. 29. 24; 2 Chron. 20. 8; Lam. 5. 6; Ezek. 17. 18. — ^u Chap. 51. 58. — ^v Chap. 51. 6, 11. — ^w Psa. 137. 8; ver. 29; Rev. 18. 6.

true! And here is the great secret of unrest, this perpetual going from mountain to hill. The only proper resting-place of the flock of God is in his fold.

"Tis there, with the lambs of thy flock,
There only, I covet to rest;
To lie at the foot of the rock,
Or rise to be hid in thy breast:
'Tis there I would always abide,
And never a moment depart,
Concealed in the cleft of thy side,
Eternally held in thy heart."—C. Wesley.

8. **As the he goats before the flocks**—Israel should be as an example and leader, strengthening the weak, guiding the bewildered, and animating and encouraging the despondent.

9. **I will raise**—*Stir up*. **An assembly of great nations**—A very just description of these heterogeneous oriental monarchies. **From thence**—From the place where these nations come together against her. **Their arrows**—Literally, *his arrows*, implying the union of all these peoples as one enemy.

BABYLON'S HUMILIATION AND ISRAEL'S GLORY, 11–20.

11. **Ye were glad... ye destroyers of mine heritage**—They not only

executed God's will of just judgment, but their own will of selfish ambition and bitter hate. This verse assigns the reason why Chaldea is given over to destruction. **Because ye are grown fat . . . bellow**—Better, *Though thou leapest proudly like a heifer threshing, and neigh like strong horses*.

12. **Your mother**—Babylon, the nation considered as a unit. **Hindermost of the nations**—Balaam calls Amalek "the first of the nations." Babylon, the "head of gold," is here called *the last* "of the nations."

14–16. **Put yourselves in array**, etc.—These verses are a command to the nations to gather themselves together to execute the purposes of Jehovah. The language is vivid and graphic, and the picture truthful and impressive. The battle array, the bended bow, the thickly flying arrows, the shout of battle, the shattered buttresses, the falling walls and the wholesale and indiscriminate slaughter, are all crowded into this brief description. **She hath given her hand**—Ordinarily a pledge of faithfulness; here a sign of submission. **Foundations**—The original occurs only here, but cannot mean "foundations," as that is quite unsuitable to the connexion. Better, *buttresses* or *battlements*. **Sower...**

off the sower from Babylon, and him that handleth the sickle in the time of harvest: for fear of the oppressing sword they shall turn every one to his people, and they shall flee every one to his own land.

17 Israel is a scattered sheep; the lions have driven him away: first the king of Assyria hath devoured him; and last this Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon hath broken his bones. 18 Therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Behold, I will punish the king of Babylon and his land, as I have punished the king of Assyria. 19 And I will bring Israel again to his habitation, and he shall feed on Carmel and Bashan, and his soul shall be satisfied upon mount Ephraim and Gil-

ead. 20 In those days, and in that time, saith the Lord, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found: for I will pardon them whom I reserve.

21 Go up against the land of Merathaim, even against it, and against the inhabitants of Pekod: waste and utterly destroy after them, saith the Lord, and do according to all that I have commanded thee. 22 A sound of battle is in the land, and of great destruction. 23 How is the hammer of the whole earth cut asunder and broken! how is Babylon become a desolation among the nations! 24 I have laid a snare for thee, and thou art also taken, O Babylon, and thou wast not aware:

7 Or, scythe. — g Isa. 13. 14; chap. 51. 9. — h Verse 6. — i Chap. 2. 15. — k 2 Kings 17. 6. — l 2 Kings 24. 10, 14. — m Isa. 65. 10; chap. 33. 12; Ezek. 34. 13, 14. — n Chap. 31. 34. — o Isa. 1. 9. — 8 Or, of the rebels.

9 Or, Visitation. — p Ezek. 23. 23. — q See 2 Sam. 16. 11; 2 Kings 18. 25; 2 Chron. 35. 23; Isa. 10. 6; 44. 28; 48. 14; chap. 34. 22. — r Chap. 51. 54. — s Isa. 14. 6; chap. 51. 20. — t Chap. 51. 8, 31, 39, 57; Dan. 5. 30, 31.

handleth the sickle—No fields are richer than those on the plains of Babylon. Herodotus represents them as yielding two hundred fold. But sower and reaper shall be cut off, and these rich fields shall remain untilled.

17. Scattered—"Scattered sheep" postulates a flock, and this conception lies in the background of this verse. But attention is fixed on the individual sheep separated from the flock and chased by the lions. These "lions" were the king of Assyria, who had scattered Israel, and the king of Babylon, who had scattered Judah.

18. I will punish... Babylon—Assyria has already been destroyed, and a like destruction shall come upon Babylon. Nothing could be in itself more incredible than that Nineveh should be overthrown; but now that this had actually taken place, it adds force and probability to the threatened overthrow of Babylon.

19. Again to his habitation,... Carmel and Bashan,... Ephraim and Gilead—The most famous localities for pasturage.

20. I will pardon—The supreme promise is reserved for the last. Not only shall the penalty be cancelled, but the sin itself shall be removed. The pain has ceased, indeed, but what is more and better, the disease is cured.

Great as Israel's sin is, it is not so great as God's mercy. Deep as are the depths of evil, they are not so deep as God's purposes of love.

PUNISHMENT FOR SIN, 21-28.

21. Land of Merathaim—Nct rebels, as in the margin, but double rebellion, a dual word. But why is Babylon called so? Various answers have been given. 1) Double, as against both God and man. But this has nothing in favour of it, and is opposed to Old Testament usage. 2) Double, first, in the tower of Babel experience, and now in this last assault upon the theocracy. This is less unsatisfactory, and yet seems too artificial to comport with the general usage of the Old Testament. 3) Double, in the sense of beyond ordinary bounds, an intensive form. This is the view to be preferred. Pekod—Literally, to visit with punishment; here used as a name of Babylon and suggestive of its immediate future.

23. The hammer of the whole earth—Babylon is here so called because it had been used to break in pieces other nations and kingdoms.

24. Laid a snare for thee—Babylon was thought impregnable, but was literally caught in a snare which she herself had been at much pains to lay. Cyrus captured her by diverting from

thou art found, and also caught, because thou hast striven against the LORD. **25** The LORD hath opened his armoury, and hath brought forth ^a the weapons of his indignation: for this ^{is} the work of the Lord God of hosts in the land of the Chaldeans. **26** Come against her ¹⁰ from the utmost border, open her storehouses: ¹¹ cast her up as heaps, and destroy her utterly: let nothing of her be left. **27** Slay all her ^v bullocks; let them go down to the slaughter: woe unto them! for their day is come, the time of ^w their visitation. **28** The voice of them that flee and escape out of the land of Babylon, ^x to declare in Zion the vengeance of the LORD our God, the vengeance of his temple. **29** Call together the archers against Babylon: ^y all ye that bend the bow, camp against it round about; let none thereof escape: ^z recompense her according to her work; according to all that she hath done, do unto her: ^a for she hath been proud against the LORD, against the Holy One of Israel.

^u Isa. 13. 5. — ^v Heb. *from the end*. — ^w 11 Or. *tread her*. — ^x Ps. 22. 12; Isa. 34. 7; chap. 46. 21. — ^y Chap. 48. 41; verse 31. — ^z Chap. 51. 10, 11. — ^a Verse 14. — ^b Verse 15; chap.

its natural channel the Euphrates, and thus opened up through its old water course a highway for his army.

25. Weapons of his indignation—The Medes and Persians. **For this is the work**, etc. — Better, *for the Lord Jehovah of hosts hath a work in the land of the Chaldeans*.

26. From the utmost border—And all intervening. The meaning is, let all come. **Storehouses**—Literally, *granaries*. **Cast her up as heaps**—Rather, “cast” *it*—namely, the grain—into heaps, that it may be devoted to destruction.

27. Bullocks—Her warlike young men, the flower of her population.

28. From Babylon the scene changes to Jerusalem, where we hear the voice of the fugitives who bring to **Zion** the tidings of God’s fearful judgments on Babylon.

PRIDE AND HUMILIATION, 29-40.

29. Call together the archers—The meaning of this verse is slightly disguised by an inaccuracy in the translation. The reading should be, *Summon the archers to Babylon, all those who bend the bow*, etc.

30 ^b Therefore shall her young men fall in the streets, and all her men of war shall be cut off in that day, saith the LORD. **31** Behold, I *am* against thee, *O thou* ¹² most proud, saith the Lord God of hosts: for ^c thy day is come, the time *that* I will visit thee. **32** And ¹³ the most proud shall stumble and fall, and none shall raise him up: and ^d I will kindle a fire in his cities, and it shall devour all round about him.

33 Thus saith the LORD of hosts; The children of Israel and the children of Judah *were* oppressed together: and all that took them captives held them fast; they refused to let them go. **34** ^e Their Redeemer *is* strong; ^f The LORD of hosts *is* his name: he shall thoroughly plead their cause, that he may give rest to the land, and disquiet the inhabitants of Babylon.

35 A sword *is* upon the Chaldeans, saith the LORD, and upon the inhabitants of Babylon, and ^g upon her princes, and upon ^h her wise men. **36** A sword

51. 56; Rev. 18. 6. — ^a Isa. 47. 10. — ^b Chap. 49. 26; 51. 4. — ^c 12 Heb. *pride*. — ^d Verse 27. — ^e 13 Heb. *pride*. — ^f Chap. 21. 14. — ^g Rev. 18. 8. — ^h Isa. 47. 4. — ⁱ Dan. 5. 30. — ^j Isa. 47. 13.

30. Therefore, etc.—Identical with the words used of Damascus in chap. xlix, 26.

32. The most proud shall stumble—The marginal reading should be preferred, so as to read: *And pride shall stumble and fall, and none shall raise him up; and I will kindle a fire in his cities, and it shall devour all round about him*.

33. Were oppressed—In this verse there has been an unfortunate rendering as to tense. The reading should be, *are oppressed . . . their captors have kept hold . . . they have refused to let them go*.

34. Give rest to the land—Rather, *to the earth*; which has been disquieted by the warlike ambition of Babylon. This will be done by suppressing the power of Babylon.

35. A sword is upon the Chaldeans—The verb inserted by the translators takes away from the dramatic character of the passage. The original has the form of an exclamation, on account of the feeling which pervades it. **Princes**—Rulers in peace, leaders in war. **Wise men**—Magicians or savants.

is¹ upon the ¹⁴liars; and they shall dote: a sword ^{is} upon her mighty men; and they shall be dismayed. **37** A sword ^{is} upon their horses, and upon their chariots, and upon all^k the mingled people that ^{are} in the midst of her; and ¹they shall become as women: a sword ^{is} upon her treasures; and they shall be robbed. **38** ^mA drought ^{is} upon her waters; and they shall be dried up: for it ^{is} the land of ⁿgraven images, and they are mad upon ^{their} idols. **39** ^oTherefore the wild beasts of the desert with the wild beasts of the islands shall ^dwell ^{there}, and the owls shall dwell therein: ^pand it shall be no more inhabited for ever; neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation. **40** ^qAs God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah and the neighbour ^{cities} thereof, saith the Lord; ^{so} shall no man abide there, neither shall any son of man dwell therein. **41** ^rBehold, a people shall come from the north, and a great nation, and many kings shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth. **42** ^sThey shall hold the bow and the lance: ^tthey are cruel, and will not show mercy: ^utheir voice shall roar like the sea, and they

ⁱ Isa. 44. 25; chap. 48. 30. — ¹⁴ Or, *chief stays*. — ¹⁵ Heb. *bars*. — ^k Chap. 25. 20, 24; Ezek. 30. 5. — ^l Chap. 51. 30; Nahum 3. 13. — ^m Isa. 44. 27; chap. 51. 33, 36; Rev. 16. 12. — ⁿ Verse 2; chap. 51. 44, 47, 52. — ^o Isa. 13. 21, 22; 24. 14; chap. 51. 37; Rev. 18. 2. — ^p Isa. 13. 20; chap. 25. 13.

36. Liars — The original word means *to babble*, to talk at random, and here the sense is *soothsayers*. **Dismayed**—Better, *confounded*.

37. They shall become as women — Their wise ones shall become as fools, their soldiers and heroes shall “become as women;” that is, destitute of all warlike qualities.

38. A drought—The consonants of the original for “drought” are the same with those for *sword* in the verse preceding; the only difference is in the vowel pointings of the Masoretes. Hence there are not a few who believe that the true form of this word is *sword*, and not *drought*. But the consistency of the MSS. with one another, the general uniformity of the Versions, and the more exact fitness of the sense, vindicate the present reading, even if they do not demonstrate its correctness; and hence it is better to retain it. **Waters** — The canals and watercourses constituting

shall ride upon horses, *every one* put in array, like a man to the battle, against thee, O daughter of Babylon. **43** The king of Babylon hath heard the report of them, and his hands waxed feeble: ^vanguish took hold of him, and pangs as of a woman in travail. **44** ^wBehold, he shall come up like a lion from the swelling of Jordan unto the habitation of the strong: but I will make them suddenly run away from her: and who ^{is} a chosen man, ^{that} I may appoint over her? for who ^{is} like me? and who will ¹⁶appoint me the time? and ^xwho ^{is} that shepherd that will stand before me? **45** Therefore hear ye ^ythe counsel of the Lord, that he hath taken against Babylon; and his purposes, that he hath purposed against the land of the Chaldeans: Surely the least of the flock shall draw them out: surely he shall make ^{their} habitation desolate with them. **46** ^zAt the noise of the taking of Babylon the earth is moved, and the cry is heard among the nations.

CHAPTER LI.

THUS saith the Lord; Behold, I will raise up against Babylon, and against them that dwell in the ¹midst

^r Gen. 19. 25; Isa. 13. 19; chap. 49. 18; 51. 26. — ^q Verse 9; chap. 6. 23; 25. 14; 51. 27; Rev. 17. 16. — ^s Chap. 6. 23. — ^t Isa. 13. 18. — ^u Isa. 5. 30. — ^v Chap. 49. 24. — ^w Chap. 49. 19, etc. — ^x Job 41. 10; chap. 49. 19. — ^y Isa. 14. 24, etc.; chap. 51. 11. — ^z Rev. 18. 9. — ¹ Heb. *heart*.

the system of irrigation for the Babylonian plain, which system was doubtless at this time the most perfect on the face of the earth.

THE AGENTS OF THIS DESTRUCTION, 41-46.

41-46. A people shall come from the north, etc.—A more particular description of the agents of Babylon's overthrow, consisting, however, almost exclusively of the materials found in previous passages.

CHAPTER LI.

THE HOSTILE NATION, 1-4.

1. Against them that dwell in the midst, etc.—Literally, *the inhabitants of the heart of my risers up*. The original for *heart of risers up* is the word Chasdim, (Chaldeans,) written according to the canon Atbash, “for the purpose of obtaining the more important meaning that Chaldea is the centre of God's enemies.” It is probable

of them that rise up against me, "a destroying wind; 2 And will send unto Babylon ^bfanners, that shall fan her, and shall empty her land: "for in the day of trouble they shall be against her round about. 3 Against *him that bend-eth* "let the archer bend his bow, and against *him that lifteth himself up* in his brigandine: and spare ye not her young men; "destroy ye utterly all her host. 4 Thus the slain shall fall in the land of the Chaldeans, "and *they that are* thrust through in her streets. 5 For Israel *hath not been* forsaken, nor Judah of his God, of the LORD of hosts; though their land was filled with sin against the Holy One of Israel. 6 "Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and deliver every man his soul: be not cut off in her iniquity; for ^hthis is the time of the LORD's vengeance; "he will render unto her a recompense. 7 "Babylon *hath been* a golden cup in the LORD's hand, that made all the earth drunken: "the nations have drunken of her wine; there-

a 2 Kings 19. 7: chap. 4. 11. — b Chap. 15. 7. — c Chap. 50. 14. — d Chap. 50. 14. — e Chap. 50. 21. — f Chap. 49. 26; 50. 30, 37. — g Chap. 50. 8; Rev. 18. 4. — h Chap. 50. 15, 28. — i Chap. 25. 14. — k Rev. 17. 4. — l Rev. 14. 8. — m Chap. 25. 16. — n Isa. 21. 9; Rev. 14. 8; 18. 2. — o Chap.

that some words in common use, written according to this cipher Atbash, were generally familiar. **Destroying wind**—Keil translates, *spirit of a destroyer*; but the leading Versions agree with the common English Version. The sense is a good one, and in harmony with the following verse.

2. **Fan her**—Rather, *winnow her*.

3. **Archer**—Literally, *bender*. The Masoretes have stumbled over the text of this verse, and there has been some variety of opinion among the critical expositors of recent times. But there is no serious difficulty in the text as it now stands, and it is by all means to be accepted.

BABYLON DESTROYED FOR ISRAEL, 5-14.

7. **Babylon... a golden cup**—This figure is used in Psa. lx, 3, and in chap. xxv, 15, 16. The prominence given to it in Rev. xvii, 4, lends additional interest to the figure. "Golden," to suggest the glory of the Babylonian kingdom.

8. **Destroyed**—Literally, *broken*. This suggests a change in the figure, or that golden means *ornamented with*

fore the nations "are mad. 8 Babylon is suddenly "fallen and destroyed: "howl for her; ^ptake balm for her pain, if so be she may be healed. 9 We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed: forsake her, and "let us go every one into his own country: "for her judgment reacheth unto heaven, and is lifted up *even* to the skies. 10 The LORD hath "brought forth our righteousness: come, and let us "declare in Zion the work of the LORD our God. 11 "Make ²bright the arrows; gather the shields: "the LORD hath raised up the spirit of the kings of the Medes: "for his device *is* against Babylon, to destroy it; because it is "the vengeance of the LORD, the vengeance of his temple. 12 "Set up the standard upon the walls of Babylon, make the watch strong, set up the watchmen, prepare the ³ambushes: for the LORD hath both devised and done that which he spake against the inhabitants of Babylon. 13 "O thou that dwellest upon many waters,

48. 20; Rev. 18. 9, 11, 19. — p Chap. 46. 11. — q Isa. 13. 14; chap. 50. 16. — r Rev. 18. 5. — s Psa. 37. 6. — t Chap. 50. 28. — u Chap. 46. 4. — 2 Heb. *pure*. — v Isa. 13. 17; verse 28. — w Chap. 50. 45. — x Chap. 50. 28. — y Nah. 2. 1; 3. 14. — 3 Heb. *lies in wait*. — z Rev. 17. 1, 15.

gold, or that this golden cup, though metal, is dashed so violently as to be shattered.

9. **Let us go every one into his own country**—This is the language of mercenaries from different lands. Hence they say, **We would have healed**, etc. **Judgment**—Really the sin by which the "judgment" is measured.

10. **Righteousness**—Literally, *righteousnesses*; the things which show us to be righteous.

11. **Make bright**—Rather, *sharpen*. **Gather**—Better, *fill*; that is, put them on in their places. **Kings of the Medes**—Suggesting the various clans, or kingships, into which they were divided.

12. **Upon the walls**—Rather, *against* "the walls of Babylon." The language is not, as some have understood, ironical, but a summons to the enemy to make the attack. **Make the watch strong**, etc.—This language has reference to the details of attack, rather than modes of defence.

13. **Dwellest upon many waters**—An allusion to the elaborate system

abundant in treasures, thine end is come, and the measure of thy covetousness. **14**^a The Lord of hosts hath sworn⁴ by himself, saying, Surely I will fill thee with men,^b as with caterpillars; and they shall⁵ lift^c up a shout against thee. **15**^d He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and^e hath stretched out the heaven by his understanding. **16**^f When he uttereth his voice, there is a⁶ multitude of waters in the heavens; and^g he causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth: he maketh lightnings with rain, and bringeth forth the wind out of his treasures. **17**^h Every man⁷ is brutish by his knowledge; every founder is confounded by the graven image: for his molten image is falsehood, and there is no breath in them. **18**^k They are vanity, the work of errors: in the time of their visitation they shall perish. **19**^l The portion of Jacob is not like them; for he is the former of

^a Chap. 49, 13; Amos 6, 8. — ⁴ Heb. *by his soul*. — ^b Nahum 3, 15. — ⁵ Heb. *utter*. — ^c Chap. 50, 15. — ^d Gen. 1, 1, 6; chap. 10, 12, etc. — ^e Job 9, 8; Psa. 104, 2; Isa. 40, 22. — ^f Chap. 10, 13. — ⁶ Or, *noise*. — ^g Psa. 135, 7.

of irrigation in the Babylonian plain, to which was due its extraordinary fruitfulness, and in some degree the eminence of Babylon herself. **Measure of thy covetousness**—The limit of thine unjust gain.

14. The Lord of hosts hath sworn—The solemnity of oath-taking is employed in announcing this destruction. **By himself**—The margin is more exactly literal and more expressive, *by his soul*. **Caterpillars**—Rather, *locusts*. **Shall lift up a shout**—Literally, *the vintage song*. The “vintage song” is, in the nature of the case, a battle song, and suggests that the men with which Babylon is filled trample her under foot, thus executing the wrath of God upon her.

GOD AGAINST THE IDOLS OF BABYLON, 15–26.

15–19. He hath made the earth by his power—These verses are almost an exact transcript of chap. x, 12–16, and hold up before the people the almightiness of Jehovah, the nothingness of idols, and the foolishness of those who put their trust in them. In one particular only is there

all things: and *Israel* is the rod of his inheritance: The Lord of hosts is his name. **20**^m Thou art my battle axe and weapons of war: for⁸ with thee will I break in pieces the nations, and with thee will I destroy kingdoms; **21** And with thee will I break in pieces the horse and his rider; and with thee will I break in pieces the chariot and his rider; **22** With thee also will I break in pieces man and woman; and with thee will I break in pieces “old and young; and with thee will I break in pieces the young man and the maid; **23** I will also break in pieces with thee the shepherd and his flock; and with thee will I break in pieces the husbandman and his yoke of oxen; and with thee will I break in pieces captains and rulers. **24**ⁿ And I will render unto Babylon and to all the inhabitants of Chaldea all their evil that they have done in Zion in your sight, saith the Lord. **25** Behold, I am against thee, ⁹O destroying mountain, saith the

^h Chap. 10, 14. — ⁷ Or, *is more brutish than to know*. — ⁱ Chap. 50, 2. — ^k Chap. 10, 15. — ^l Chap. 10, 16. — ^m Isa. 10, 5, 15; chap. 50, 23. — ⁸ Or, *in thee, or, by thee*. — ⁿ So 2 Chron. 36, 17. — ^o Chap. 50, 15, 29. — ^p Isa. 13, 2; Zech. 4, 7.

a difference between the passage as given here and as found in the tenth chapter. In verse 19 the word *Israel* has been omitted, and the predicate is connected with the general subject, God. This is not an error of the text, as some have concluded, and the introduction of the word in several of the Versions is to be condemned.

20–24. Thou art—By “thou,” Ewald understands the king of Israel; Grotius, Cyrus and the Medes; Nägelsbach, an ideal person; Calmet and most expositors, Babylon. The last is to be preferred, and is supported by chap. l, 23. The enumeration of the things which this battle-hammer should break in pieces is an orderly one. 1) **The nations and kingdoms.** 2) **The military forces—the horse and his rider, the chariot and his rider.** 3) **The people—man and woman... old and young... young man and ... maid.** 4) **Occupations—shepherd ... husbandman ... captains and rulers.**

25, 26. Destroying mountain—The same phrase is used in 2 Kings xxiii, 13, and is translated “mount of corruption.” It is there applied to the

LORD, which destroyest all the earth: and I will stretch out mine hand upon thee, and roll thee down from the rocks, and will make thee a burnt mountain.

26 And they shall not take of thee a stone for a corner, nor a stone for foundations; * but thou shalt be * desolate for ever, saith the LORD. **27** * Set ye up a standard in the land, blow the trumpet among the nations, * prepare the nations against her, call together against her * the kingdoms of Ararat, Minni, and Ashchenaz; appoint a captain against her; cause the horses to come up as the rough caterpillars. **28** Prepare against her the nations with * the kings of the Medes, the captains thereof, and all the rulers

q Rev. 8. 8. — *r* Chap. 50. 40. — *9* Heb. *everlasting desolations*. — *s* Isa. 13. 2. — *t* Chap. 25. 14. — *u* Chap. 50. 41. — *v* Verse 11.

southern portion of the mount of Olives, in view of the idolatrous shrines set up by Solomon. Here the phrase is applied to Babylon, and suggests its eminence among the nations, and its power for evil in working physical and moral ruin. **Roll thee down**—The explanation of this phrase is doubtful. **I...will make thee a burnt mountain**—Literally, a *mountain of burning*. Language founded on the conception of a volcano. The threat, **Thou shalt be desolate forever**, falls in well with the notion of a burnt-out mountain, though it means evidently more than that it should be a scene of ruin. It is never more to be used. **They shall not take of thee a stone for a corner, nor a stone for foundations**—Its history is terminated. Never again are human hopes and interests to be founded on Babylon.

THE NATIONS SUMMONED AGAINST BABYLON, 27–37.

27. Set ye up a standard—Another call to war. This whole passage is a parallelism of that which commences at verse 12, but descends more into particulars. **In the land**—Better, *earth*. **Prepare**—Literally, *consecrate*; alluding to the religious solemnities with which war is begun. The kingdoms here mentioned, **Ararat, Minni, and Ashchenaz**, were located in or near Armenia. **Captain**—This word occurs besides only in Nah. iii, 17, and its precise import is doubtful. In both

thereof, and all the land of his dominion. **29** And the land shall tremble and sorrow: for every purpose of the LORD shall be performed against Babylon, * to make the land of Babylon a desolation without an inhabitant. **30** The mighty men of Babylon have forborne to fight, they have remained in *their* holds: their might hath failed; * they became as women: they have burned her dwellingplaces; * her bars are broken. **31** * One post shall run to meet another, and one messenger to meet another, to show the king of Babylon that his city is taken at *one* end, **32** And that * the passages are stopped, and the reeds they have burned with fire, and

w Chap. 50. 13, 35, 40; verse 43. — *x* Isa. 19. 16; chap. 48. 41; 50. 37. — *y* Lam. 2. 9; Amos 1. 5; Nah. 3. 13. — *z* Chap. 50. 24. — *a* Chap. 50. 38.

passages the habits of locusts are probably had in view. **Rough caterpillars**—Rather, *as the bristly locust*; spoken “of the locust after its third skin, when the wings are still covered with the rough, horny hide.”—*Fürst*.

29. The land shall tremble—The Hebrew of this passage is more expressive than the common English Version: *Then the earth quaked and trembled. For the purposes of Jehovah against Babylon have stood fast—To make Babylon a waste without inhabitant.*

30. Have forborne—*Have ceased*; not from cowardice, but from hopelessness. They become **as women**, and stay in the inaccessible places to await the end.

31. One post shall run... and one messenger—Indicative of haste and confusion. **To show the king**—Who is in his royal palace. These messengers come from all directions and meet one another in the palace with the same dreadful news.

32. Passages—Literally, *crossing-places*, either bridges or fords, or more probably both. **Are stopped**—Rather, *seized, occupied*. **Reeds... burned**—Better, *marshes* or *ponds*, alluding to the artificial lakes which, according to Herodotus, formed an important part of the defences of Babylon. As these could not be literally burned, the translation “reeds” has been adopted, but utterly without authority. The language is poetic and hyperbolic, and should not be forced.

the men of war are affrighted. **33** For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: The daughter of Babylon is ^a like a threshingfloor, ^c *it is time to thresh her*; yet a little while, ^d and the time of her harvest shall come. **34** Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon hath ^e devoured me, he hath crushed me, he hath made me an empty vessel, he hath swallowed me up like a dragon, he hath filled his belly with my delicacies, he hath cast me out. **35** ^f The violence done to me and to my ^g *flesh be upon Babylon*, shall the ^h *inhabitant of Zion* say; and my blood upon the inhabitants of Chaldea, shall Jerusalem say. **36** Therefore thus saith the LORD; Behold, ⁱ I will plead thy cause, and take vengeance for thee; ^j and I will dry up her sea, and make her springs dry. **37** ^k And Babylon shall become heaps, a dwellingplace for dragons, ^l an astonishment, and a hissing, without an inhabitant. **38** They shall roar together like lions: they shall ^m *yell as lions* whelps. **39** In their heat I will make their feasts, and ⁿ I will make them drunken, that they may rejoice, and sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake,

^b Isa. 21. 10; Amos 1. 3; Micah 4. 13. — ^c Isa. 41. 15; Hab. 3. 12. — ^d Or, *in the time that he thresheth her*. — ^e Isa. 17. 5, etc.; Hosea 6. 11; Joel 3. 13; Rev. 14. 15, 18. — ^f Chap. 50. 17. — ^g Heb. *my violence*. — ^h Or, *remainder*. — ⁱ Heb. *inhabittress*. — ^j Chap. 50. 34. — ^k Chap. 50. 38. — ^l Isa. 13. 22; chap. 50. 39; Rev. 18. 2.

33. A threshingfloor — Trodden hard and ready for the time of harvest, which is also the time of threshing.

34, 35. The pronouns are in the plural, but have been without warrant changed into the singular in the Keri, and so in the English Version. The literal reading is, *hath devoured us, crushed us, etc.*, etc. The reference is to Israel, and the doctrine of the passage is, that these calamities have fallen on Babylon because of its offences against Israel. **Dragon** — Usually a sea monster; probably the crocodile.

36. Her sea — The Euphrates river. The distinction between seas and rivers was by no means so clearly drawn in ancient times as now. Hence Jonah speaks of a *nahar* (river) in the sea. **Springs**, in this passage, are the smaller streams which water and fertilize the country. Indeed, the literal import of the original is, *her digging*, and so it very exactly suits the artificial canals dug for this purpose.

saith the LORD. **40** I will bring them down like lambs to the slaughter, like rams with he goats. **41** How is ^a She-shach taken! and how is ^b the praise of the whole earth surprised! how is Babylon become an astonishment among the nations! **42** ^c The sea is come up upon Babylon: she is covered with the multitude of the waves thereof. **43** ^d Her cities are a desolation, a dry land, and a wilderness, a land wherein no man dwelleth, neither doth ^e any son of man pass thereby. **44** ^f And I will punish Bel in Babylon, and I will bring forth out of his mouth that which he hath swallowed up: and the nations shall not flow together any more unto him; yea, ^g the wall of Babylon shall fall. **45** ^h My people, go ye out of the midst of her, and deliver ye every man his soul from the fierce anger of the LORD. **46** And ⁱ lest your heart faint, and ye fear ^j for the rumour that shall be heard in the land; — a rumour shall both come one year, and after that in another year shall come a rumour, and violence in the land, ruler against ruler. **47** Therefore, behold, the days come, that ^k I will ^l do judgment upon the graven images

ⁱ Chap. 25. 9, 18. — ^l Or, *shake themselves*. — ^k Ver. 57. — ^l Chap. 25. 26. — ^m Isa. 13. 19; chap. 49. 25; Dan. 4. 30. — ⁿ See Isa. 8. 7, 8. — ^o Chap. 50. 39, 40; verse 29. — ^p Isa. 46. 1; chap. 50. 2. — ^q Verse 58. — ^r Verse 6; chap. 50. 8; Rev. 18. 4. — ^s Or, *let not*. — ^t 2 Kings 19. 7. — ^u Chap. 50. 2; ver. 52. — ^v Heb. *visit upon*.

37. Heaps — Namely, of rubbish. How literally this has been fulfilled is shown by Rawlinson. (*Ancient Monarchies*, ii, 521.) **Dragons** — Not the word used in verse 34, but one meaning *jackals*.

PICTURE OF BABYLON'S RUIN, 38-49.

38, 39. They... roar — Not *shall roar*. The scene is that of a carousal, in the midst of which the blow falls. Whether the language here is a prophecy of the way in which Babylon was taken by Cyrus or not, it is certainly evident that it is quite suitable to it.

44. Swallowed up — The sacred vessels, the spoil taken from other nations, and the voluntary offerings of the people.

46. And lest your heart faint — In order that the sense here may come out into expression, some such word as *beware* should be employed. *Beware lest your heart faint.*

of Babylon: and her whole land shall be confounded, and all her slain shall fall in the midst of her. **48** Then ^athe heaven and the earth, and all that *is* therein, shall sing for Babylon: ^vfor the spoilers shall come unto her from the north, saith the Lord. **49** ¹⁷As Babylon *hath caused* the slain of Israel to fall, so at Babylon shall fall the slain of all ¹⁸the earth. **50** ^wYe that have escaped the sword, go away, stand not still: remember the Lord afar off, and let Jerusalem come into your mind. **51** ^xWe are confounded, because we have heard reproach: shame hath covered our faces; for strangers are come into the sanctuaries of the Lord's house. **52** Wherefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, ^ythat I will do judgment upon her graven images: and through all her land the wounded shall groan. **53** ^zThough Babylon shall mount up to heaven, and though she should fortify the height of her strength, *yet* from me shall spoilers come unto her, saith the

Lord. **54** ^aA sound of a cry *cometh* from Babylon, and great destruction from the land of the Chaldeans: **55** Because the Lord hath spoiled Babylon, and destroyed out of her the great voice; when her waves do roar like great waters, a noise of their voice is uttered: **56** Because the spoiler is come upon her, *even* upon Babylon, and her mighty men are taken, every one of their bows is broken: ^bfor the Lord God of recompenses shall surely requite. **57** ^cAnd I will make drunk her princes, and her wise men, her captains, and her rulers, and her mighty men: and they shall sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake, saith ^dthe King, whose name *is* The Lord of hosts. **58** Thus saith the Lord of hosts: ^e¹⁹The broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly ²⁰broken, and her high gates shall be burned with fire; and ^fthe people shall labour in vain, and the folk in the fire, and they shall be weary.

59 The word which Jeremiah the prophet commanded Seraiah the son of

^a Isa. 44. 23; 49. 13; Rev. 18. 20. — ^v Chap. 50. 3, 41. — ¹⁷ Or. *Both Babylon is to fall, O ye slain of Israel, and with Babylon, etc.* — ¹⁸ Or, *the country.* — ^w Chap. 44. 28. — ^x Psal. 44. 15, 16; 79. 4. — ^y Verse 47.

^z Chap. 49. 16; Amos 9. 2; Obad. 4. — ^a Chap. 50. 22. — ^b Psal. 91. 1; chap. 50. 29: — ^c Verse 24. — ^d Verse 39. — ^e Chap. 46. 18; 48. 15. — ^f Or, *The walls of broad Babylon.* — ^e Verse 44. — ²⁰ Or, *made naked.* — ^f Hab. 2. 13.

FINAL SUMMING UP, 50-58.

50. Remember the Lord afar off — Namely, in Babylon, the land of your captivity. Such language as this would be well suited to stir up the hopes and affections of the captive Israelites, and induce a longing to return to their own land.

51. We are confounded — This verse only recites the wrongs done, and the abject condition into which the people had come.

53. Height of her strength — Possibly an allusion to the height of her walls and towers.

58. Broad walls... high gates — See the descriptions of Babylon by Strabo and others. According to Herodotus the walls were eighty-five feet thick and three hundred and thirty-seven and a half feet high. Ctesias makes them three hundred feet high. Strabo, seventy-five feet high and thirty-two feet thick. Xenophon saw in Babylon walls a hundred and fifty feet in height. Duncker concludes that these walls must have had a height of two hundred feet above the ditch, and a proportionate

breadth of from thirty to forty feet. This breadth would be sufficient to permit of teams being drawn along the rampart between the battlements, as Herodotus and Strabo inform us, without touching. The rampart on the walls of Nineveh is said to have afforded room for the driving abreast of three chariots. As to the "gates," Herodotus represents them as most elaborately constructed and ornamented; the posts, the folding doors, and the thresholds being of bronze. Oppert quotes an inscription in which Nebuchadrezzar says, "In the thresholds of the great gates, I inserted folding doors of brass, with very strong palings and gratings." There were one hundred of these gates, twenty-five in each of the four sides of the wall. (The remainder of the verse is quoted from Habakkuk.)

59. The word, etc. — This is the caption of the brief historical appendage comprised in verses 59-64, which was sent to the captives at Babylon by Zedekiah. As to the reasons of Zedekiah's visit to Babylon we have no intimation. In the *Records of*

Neriah, the son of Maaseiah, when he went ²¹ with Zedekiah the king of Judah into Babylon in the fourth year of his reign. And *this* Seraiah was a ²² quiet prince. **60** So Jeremiah wrote in a book all the evil that should come upon Babylon, *even* all these words that are written against Babylon. **61** And Jeremiah said to Seraiah, When thou comest to Babylon, and shalt see, and shalt read all these words; **62** Then shalt thou say, O Lord, thou hast spoken against this place, to cut it off, that ^a none shall remain in it, neither man nor beast, but that it shall be ²³ desolate for ever. **63** And it shall be, when thou hast made an end of reading this book, ^b that thou shalt bind a stone to it, and cast it into the midst of Euphrates: **64** And

²¹ Or, *on the behalf of*. — ²² Or, *prince of Menucha*, or, *chief chamberlain*. — ^a Chap. 50. 3, 39; verse 29.

the Past, iii, 107, 120, we have a copy of a document from which we learn that Esar-haddon assembled twenty-two kings of Syria at the commencement of his great palace in Nineveh, and this may suggest how, for some similar reason of pomp and state, Zedekiah may have been summoned to Babylon. Orit may be, that his fidelity was suspected, and so he had to go to Babylon to vindicate himself. **A quiet prince**—Literally, *prince of the resting place*. The plural of this word is rendered “resting places” in Isa. xxxii, 18. This officer answers to the modern quarter-master, his duty being to go forward and select the places where the king and his train would stop for refreshments, and also where they would pass the night.

60. In a book—Literally, *in one book*, a parenthetic remark which paves the way for the direction given in verse 63.

61. And shalt see, and shalt read—Better, *see that thou read*. Not for the purpose of warning the Babylonians, but as part of a proclamation that the Jews might understand.

63. Bind a stone...cast...into the...Euphrates—Not to destroy the book, but to perfect the symbolism. The stone is not only to make the book sink, but to keep it from rising again, thus betokening the permanent

thou shalt say, Thus shall Babylon sink, and shall not rise from the evil that I will bring upon her: ¹ and they shall be weary. Thus far *are* the words of Jeremiah.

CHAPTER LII.

ZEDEKIAH was ^a one and twenty years old when he ¹ began to reign, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Hamutal the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. **2** And he did *that which was evil* in the eyes of the Lord, according to all that Jehoiakim had done. **3** For through the anger of the Lord it came to pass in Jerusalem and Judah, till he had cast them out from his presence, that Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.

²³ Heb. *desolations*. — ^b See Rev. 18. 21. — ⁱ Verse 58. — ^a 2 Kings 24. 18. — ¹ Heb. *reigned*.

downfall and utter extinction of the greatest city then on the face of the earth.

64. Thus far are the words of Jeremiah—This implies that the following chapter does not belong to this body of prophecy, but constitutes an historical appendix added by another hand. “It is an instance of the scrupulous care taken by the Jews of the sacred writings committed to their keeping.” —*Speaker's Commentary*.

CHAPTER LII.

As intimated in the closing words of the preceding chapter, this final chapter of the book must be regarded as standing by itself as an appendix. Of the author we have no knowledge whatever. The one thing which seems certain is, that it cannot have been written by Jeremiah, as at least a portion of its contents belong to a period subsequent to the time of his death. It is also to be noted that the substance of the chapter is identical with the closing portion of the Second Book of Kings, with, however, many slight changes in words and order. See the notes in that place.

1-3. Zedekiah...king of Babylon—These three verses are of the same purport with 2 Kings xxiv, 18-20, with only two unessential differences. The word **for** is not to be taken as

4 And it came to pass in the ^bninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, in the tenth *day* of the month, *that* Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon came, he and all his army, against Jerusalem, and pitched against it, and built forts against it round about. **5** So the city was besieged unto the eleventh year of king Zedekiah. **6** And in the fourth month, in the ninth *day* of the month, the famine was sore in the city, so that there was no bread for the people of the land. **7** Then the city was broken up, and all the men of war fled, and went forth out of the city by night by the way of the gate between the two walls, which was by the king's garden; (now the Chaldeans were by the city round about :) and they went by the way of the plain.

8 But the army of the Chaldeans pursued after the king, and overtook Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho; and all his army was scattered from him. **9** ^cThen they took the king, and carried him up unto the king of Babylon to Riblah in the land of Hamath; where he gave judgment upon him. **10** ^dAnd the king of Babylon slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes: he slew also all the princes of Judah in Riblah. **11** Then he ^eput out the eyes of Zedekiah; and the king of Babylon bound him in ^fchains, and carried him to Babylon, and put him in ^gprison till the day of his death.

12 ^hNow in the fifth month, in the tenth *day* of the month, ⁱwhich was the nineteenth year of Nebuchadrezzar king

of Babylon, ^kcame Nebuzar-adan, ^lcaptain of the guard, *which* ^mserved the king of Babylon, into Jerusalem, **13** And burned the house of the Lord, and the king's house; and all the houses of Jerusalem, and all the houses of the great *men*, burned he with fire: **14** And all the army of the Chaldeans, that were with the captain of the guard, brake down all the walls of Jerusalem round about. **15** ⁿThen Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard carried away captive *certain* of the poor of the people, and the residue of the people that remained in the city, and those that fell away, that fell to the king of Babylon, and the rest of the multitude. **16** But Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard left *certain* of the poor of the land for vinedressers and for husbandmen.

17 ^oAlso the ^ppillars of brass that were in the house of the Lord, and the bases, and the brazen sea that was in the house of the Lord, the Chaldeans brake, and carried all the brass of them to Babylon.

18 ^qThe caldrons also, and the ^rshovels, and the snuffers, and the ^sbowls, and the spoons, and all the vessels of brass wherewith they ministered, took they away. **19** And the basins, and the ^tfirepans, and the bowls, and the caldrons, and the candlesticks, and the spoons, and the cups; *that* which was of gold *in* gold, and *that* which was of silver *in* silver, took the captain of the guard away. **20** The two pillars, one sea, and twelve brazen bulls that were under the bases, which king Solomon had made in the house of the Lord:

^b 2 Kings 25. 1-27; chapter 39. 1; Zechariah 8. 19. — ^c Chapter 32. 4. — ^d Ezekiel 12. 13. — ^e 2 Hebrew, *blinded*. — ^f 3 Or, *letters*. — ^g 4 Hebrew, *house of the wards*. — ^h Zechariah 7. 5; 8. 19. — ⁱ See verse 29. — ^j Chapter 39. 9. — ^k 5 Or, *chief marshal*.

^l 6 Heb. *chief of the executioners*, or, *slaughter-men*. And so verse 14, *cic*. — ^m 7 Heb. *stood by*, *re*. — ⁿ 8 Chap. 39. 9. — ^o Chap. 27. 19. — ^p 9 See 1 Kings 7. 15, 23, 27, 50. — ^q Exod. 27. 3; 2 Kings 25. 14, 15, 16. — ^r 8 Or, *instruments to remove the ashes*. — ^s 9 Or, *basins*. — ^t 10 Or, *censers*.

causal, but is simply the statement of the effect.

4. Nebuchadrezzar — A more ancient and correct form than Nebuchadnezzar.

9-11. Then they took the king — Zedekiah, king of Judah. **Put him in prison** — Namely, in Babylon. **Till the day of his death** — Yet it appears that toward the close of his life his confinement was less rigorous than when he was first taken to Babylon, and that an honourable interment was given him after his death. This is the purport of the promise made to him through Jeremiah while yet

in Judea, as recorded in chapter xxxiv, 1-5.

12. The tenth day of the month — In 2 Kings xxv, 8, we read the *seventh day*. This discrepancy is probably owing to letters having been used for numerals, and the proper letter having been wrongly transcribed.

13. All the houses of the great — Literally, *every house the great*. "The meaning is, that only the larger houses were burned; and as the article here is intensive, it should be rendered all the largest 'houses.'" — *Speaker's Commentary*.

^m 11 the brass of all these vessels was without weight. **21** And concerning the ⁿ pillars, the height of one pillar was eighteen cubits; and a ¹² fillet of twelve cubits did compass it; and the thickness thereof was four fingers: it was hollow. **22** And a chapter of brass was upon it; and the height of one chapter was five cubits, with network and pomegranates upon the chapters round about, all of brass. The second pillar also and the pomegranates were like unto these. **23** And there were ninety and six pomegranates on a side; and ^o all the pomegranates upon the network were a hundred round about.

24 And ^p the captain of the guard took Seraiah the chief priest, ^q and Zephaniah the second priest, and the three keepers of the ¹³ door: **25** He took also out of the city a eunuch, which had the charge of the men of war; and seven men of them that ¹⁴ were near the king's person, which were found in the city; and the

¹⁵ principal scribe of the host, who mustered the people of the land; and three-score men of the people of the land, that were found in the midst of the city. **26** So Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard took them, and brought them to the king of Babylon to Riblah. **27** And the king of Babylon smote them, and put them to death in Riblah in the land of Hamath. Thus Judah was carried away captive out of his own land. **28** ^r This is the people whom Nebuchadrezzar carried away captive: in the ^s seventh year ^t three thousand Jews and three and twenty: **29** ^u In the eighteenth year of Nebuchadrezzar he carried away captive from Jerusalem eight hundred thirty and two ¹⁰ persons: **30** In the three and twentieth year of Nebuchadrezzar, Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard carried away captive of the Jews seven hundred forty and five persons: all the persons were four thousand and six hundred.

^m 1 Kings 7. 47. — ¹¹ Heb. *their brass*. — ⁿ 1 Kings 7. 15; 2 Kings 25. 17; 2 Chron. 3. 15. — ¹² Heb. *threshold*. — ^o See 1 Kings 7. 20. — ^p 2 Kings 25. 18. — ^q Chap. 21. 1; 29. 25. — ¹³ Heb. *threshold*.

¹⁴ Heb. *saw the face of the king*. — ¹⁵ Or, *scribe of the captain of the host*. — ^r 2 Kings 21. 2. — ^s See 2 Kings 24. 12. — ^t See 2 Kings 24. 14. — ^u See verse 12; chap. 39. 9. — ¹⁶ Heb. *souls*.

23. Ninety and six pomegranates on a side; all... were a hundred— The Hebrew for "on a side" is *wind-wards*, and it cannot mean that there were "ninety-six pomegranates" on each side, for then, as the capitals were square, the whole number would have been three hundred and eighty-four. The expression must mean that "ninety-six" were toward the four winds, twenty-four facing each quarter, and one at each corner, which would be each toward two winds, as north-east, north-west, etc.: this would make "a hundred" all told.

28-30. In these verses we have an enumeration of the different deportations of Jews by Nebuchadrezzar, namely, first, 3,023 in the seventh year of his reign; second, 832 in the eighteenth year of his reign; and third, 745 in the twenty-third year of his rule; thus giving for the total, 4,600.

In this statement there are, as all confess, serious, if not inexplicable, difficulties. For example, in verse 12 the second deportation is represented as occurring in the nineteenth year of Nebuchadrezzar, instead of the eight-

eenth as here; and the first deportation was, as we learn from 2 Kings xxiv, 12, in the eighth, and not in the seventh, year of his reign, and was much more numerous than is here stated. Hence many accept the suggestion of Ewald, that the word *ten* before seven has been dropped out of the Hebrew text, and that the true reading should be *seventeenth*. This would lead to the conclusion that we have mentioned here, simply three deportations in the final war of Zedekiah, occurring in the seventeenth, eighteenth, and twenty-third years of Nebuchadrezzar's reign. The first took place a year before the fall of Jerusalem, and probably embraced people taken from the country districts of Judea. This accounts for the smallness of the number, three thousand and twenty-three. In the following year were added eight hundred and thirty-two others, who may have been selected because they were judged to be turbulent and dangerous men. Finally, at a later time, probably on the occasion of the war with the Ammonites and Moabites mentioned by Josephus, (*Antiq.*, x, 9, 7,) seven hundred and

31 * And it came to pass in the seven and thirtieth year of the captivity of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the twelfth month, in the five and twentieth *day* of the month, *that* Evil-merodach king of Babylon, in the *first* year of his reign, * lifted up the head of Jehoiachin king of Judah, and brought him forth out of prison, **32** And spake ¹⁷ kindly unto

² 2 Kings 25, 27, 28, 29, 30. — ¹⁰ Gen. 40, 13, 20. — ¹⁷ Heb. *good things with him*.

forty-five more were carried away, perhaps because they too were judged likely to become disturbers of the peace.

31-34. Evil-merodach . . . lifted up the head of Jehoiachin—This was evidently an act of favour performed on the occasion of his ascending the throne. May not the influence of Daniel and other highly es-

him, and set his throne above the throne of the kings that *were* with him in Babylon, **33** And changed his prison garments: * and he did continually eat bread before him all the days of his life. **34** And *for* his diet, there was a continual diet given him of the king of Babylon, ¹⁸ every day a portion until the day of his death, all the days of his life.

² 2 Sam. 9, 13. — ¹⁸ Heb. *the matter of the day in his day*.

teemed Jews at the Babylonian court have operated in favour of the imprisoned king? The phrase "lifted up the head," is a frequent one to denote the removal of sorrow from any cause, for those who grieve are apt to hang down the head, and those who rejoice to carry it erect. Evil-merodach, by this act of grace, gave gladness to Jehoiachin.

INTRODUCTION TO THE LAMENTATIONS.

1. Name.

LIKE most of the books of the Pentateuch, this book is called in the Hebrew by its first word—אֵיכָה—How? “Three prophets have used the word אֵיכָה with reference to Israel: Moses, Isaiah, and Jeremiah. To what are these to be likened? To three bridesmen who have seen the afterward widowed wife in three stages. The first has seen her in her opulence and her pride, and he said: ‘O how shall I bear alone your overbearing and your strife?’ Deut. i, 12. The second has seen her in her dissipation and her dissoluteness, and he said: ‘O how is she become a harlot!’ Isa. i, 21. And the third has seen her in her desolation, and he said: ‘O how does she sit solitary!’ Lam. i, 1.”—*Introduction to Echah Rabbathi*.

The Rabbins use the name קִינָה (Kinoh)—Elegies or Lamentations; a term which is applied to David’s lament over Saul and Jonathan, and is repeatedly used in the Old Testament. (See Jer. vii, 29; ix, 10, 20, etc.) In 2 Chron. xxxv, 25, it is applied to the dirge composed by the prophet in memory of King Josiah, which some have conjectured to be identical with the fourth chapter of this book, though without sufficient reason.

In the Septuagint the title is Θρήνοι Ἱερემίου—Lamentations of Jeremiah; which title is expanded in the Vulgate to Θρήνοι, that is, *Lamentationes Jeremiæ Prophetæ*. But both in the English and German Versions the title is simply “Lamentations.”

2. Position.

In the Septuagint, followed by the leading subsequent Versions, this book stands in close connexion with that of the prophecies of Jeremiah. Bleek regards this as the original arrangement, while that of the Masoretes, which places it in the third division of the Old Testament—the Hagiographa—must, in his opinion, be held as of later origin. This is in harmony with the tradition plainly stated in the Septuagint, that Jeremiah was its author. But it is better to consider the Masoretic arrangement as the original one. The Jews kept the Law by itself as the first division of their Scriptures, and the vital

germ out of which the whole Jewish culture was developed. Then came the PROPHETS, into which division they admitted the earlier histories written by the seers, which set forth the straight, ongoing development of the Hebrew life as it went forward toward its divinely appointed goal—the spiritual kingdom of the Messiah; and also the writings which were strictly prophetic in the narrow and special sense of the term. Then came all the rest of the books, under the general name of WRITINGS, embracing those books which bore a less manifest and direct relation to the visible theocracy; all lyrical, philosophical, subjective, episodic, and supplementary books. On this principle of arrangement this book should stand where we now find it in the Hebrew Bible, in the third division, by the side of the other poetical books. At a later time it was arranged as one of the five Megilloth—Ruth, Esther, Ecclesiastes, Canticles, and Lamentations.

3. Its Authorship.

Like many others of the biblical books it bears the name of no author, and so the inquiry as to its authorship is a legitimate and necessary one.

1. *External testimony* is practically unanimous in ascribing the book to Jeremiah. To the Septuagint Version the following words are prefixed: "And it came to pass after Israel had been carried away captive, and Jerusalem made desolate, Jeremiah sat weeping and lamented this lamentation over Jerusalem, and said." This is copied with slight change into the Vulgate, and also into the Arabic Version. Josephus speaks of Jeremiah's having composed "a dirge for Josiah's funeral which *remains unto this day*;" words which probably identify the book though they misrepresent its subject. The Targum of Jonathan and the Talmud ascribe the book to Jeremiah, as does also the Syriac Version. When we add that such Christian Fathers as Origen and Jerome assume the authorship of Jeremiah as certain, and that the Jewish and Christian tradition to this effect is clear and unanimous down to the eighteenth century, it will appear that the external evidence for Jeremiah's authorship is unusually full and perfect, and hence as nearly conclusive as external evidence in its nature can be.

2. *Internal evidence* is also in harmony with this view. The book must have proceeded from one occupying such a *position* as Jeremiah—an eye witness of the downfall of Judah and Jerusalem. The spirit and tone of the book accords perfectly with the character of Jeremiah, the tenderness, pathos, sorrow, severity, spirituality, and sense of isolation in whose writings constitute very marked and distinguishing peculiarities. The general style of these poems answers well to what we see in the prose writings of Jeremiah, in that it is simple

almost to negligence, repetitious, and at the same time full of allusions to the earlier Hebrew literature. And if we look for the particular words and turns of expression which most characterize Jeremiah, we find not a few of them in these poems. For a specimen list of these consult Keil's Introduction to the Old Testament, and also Keil's Introduction to this book in his commentary.

The two most weighty objections to this view are: 1. That there are contradictions of sentiment between Lamentations and Jeremiah; and 2. That some things in this book were taken from Ezekiel. For specifications under this last head consult the Introduction of Nägelsbach in his commentary, and also Keil. The one contradiction which has been pointed out and insisted on is between Lam. v, 7, and Jer. xxxi, 29, 30. In the former it is said, "We have borne the iniquities" of the fathers; and in the latter it is said, "In those days they shall say no more, The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge. But every one shall die for his own iniquity," etc. But here is no contradiction, but, on the contrary, perfect harmony. The things which are stated are different, indeed, but perfectly congruous, for both are true. And as to correspondences in language with Ezekiel which have been pointed out, they are all adequately explained by the simple fact that Jeremiah and Ezekiel shared a common life, and may even have known one another's writings.

We see in these criticisms nothing conclusive, and, indeed, nothing of considerable weight in the considerations urged against the traditional view as to the authorship of this book, and hence do not hesitate to ascribe it to Jeremiah.

4. Its Form and Structure.

The book consists of five lyric poems, answering to the different chapters of the English Version. The first four of these are highly artificial in their structure, each one being arranged in twenty-two portions, answering to the letters of the Hebrew alphabet. The verses or divisions of the first three of these consist each of three double clauses, which clauses in the third chapter all begin with the same letter of the alphabet, as א, א, א, ב, ב, ב, etc., etc. In chapter four the verses consist of two clauses. In chapter five the alphabetical feature is not presented, but there is the same number of verses. Probably the departure from the alphabetic peculiarity is due to the fact that the character of the thought, being rather a prayer than an elegy, calls for less artificiality of structure.

There is one striking fact, however, as to the order of the letters in these alphabetic poems. In the first, the established order of the He-

brew alphabet is observed; but in the three others the verse beginning with *pe* (פ) precedes that beginning with *ayin*, (א.) This cannot be attributed to the mistake of the copyist, for the relations of the thought forbid this theory, as well as the fact that the same order is observed in three chapters successively. Michælis, Ewald, and others conclude that there has been a change in the order of the letters; but of this there is no proof, and it is opposed to the testimony of the alphabetic psalms, most if not all of which are certainly older than this book. While, therefore, we are unable to explain this irregularity satisfactorily, we yet find that it stands not alone. Similar irregularities appear in the alphabetic psalms. The only thing really remarkable and exceptional is, the repetition of the same peculiarity in three poems successively.

5. Subject-Matter.

The general theme of these elegiac poems is the destruction of Jerusalem, the overthrow of the kingdom of Judah by the Chaldeans, and the consequent misery which had befallen the covenant people. But beneath all is the theocracy itself, apart from the fortunes of individuals, which had seemed to come into overthrow and ruin before the powers of this world. So that this saddest wail in all literature is born, not of sorrow and disappointment as to merely human and earthly interests, but of that deeper agony of soul which comes of the prostration of spiritual hopes.

These five poems bring to view different aspects of the common calamity. In the first, the *sufferings* of the people are dwelt upon; in the second, these are more distinctly *referred to God*, and counted as evidences of his displeasure in view of their *sins*; in the third, the spiritual sorrow and disappointment is made more prominent; in the fourth, all is referred to the sins of the people and the leaders; and finally, in the fifth, the prophet prays that Jehovah will remove the reproach of his people, and restore to them his favour.

6. Date.

The manifest organic relation of these poems necessitates the conclusion that they were written at or about the same time. The only possible exception is as to the last, and this is neither probable nor important. They must follow *immediately* the downfall of Jerusalem and Judah, for their vivid expressions of grief betoken the freshness and fearfulness of the calamity. It is possible, then, that the book originated in the interval between the destruction of Jerusalem and Jeremiah's departure for Egypt. Or, with even greater probability may the book be referred to the month which elapsed between the capture of Jerusalem and its destruction. (Bleek.)

7. Liturgical Use.

“The Book of Lamentations has always been much used in liturgical services as giving the spiritual aspect of sorrow. It is recited in the Jewish synagogues on the ninth of Ab, the day on which the temple was destroyed. In the Roman Catholic Church it is sung at Vespers in Holy Week. In our own Church (the Church of England) the first, second, and third chapters were appointed in the first book of Edward VI. to be read on the Wednesday and Thursday before Easter. This having been discontinued in the second book of Edward VI., and in all subsequent revisions of the Prayer Book, was restored in 1871, when the whole of chap. iii, and portions of chaps. i, ii, and iv, were ordered to be read on the Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday in Holy Week. For this choice two chief reasons may be given: the first, that in the wasted city and homeless wanderings of the chosen people we see an image of the desolation and ruin of the soul cast away from God’s presence into the outer darkness because of sin; the second and chief, because the mournful words of the prophet set Him before us who has borne the chastisement due to human sin, and of whom instinctively we think as we pronounce the words:

Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by?

Behold and see

If there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow

Which is done unto me,

Wherewith Jehovah hath afflicted me

In the day of his fierce anger?”

—*Speaker’s Commentary.*

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

	PAGES
THE MISERIES DESCRIBED; LAMENTATIONS IN VIEW OF PRESENT MISERIES.....	457-459

CHAPTER II.

THE JUDGMENT; THE LAMENTATION; THE CALL TO PRAYER; THE PRAYER.....	460-463
--	---------

CHAPTER III.

PERSONAL LAMENTATION FOR GRIEVOUS SUFFERINGS; PIOUS ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY AND MERCY; CONFESSION OF SIN, AND LAMENTATIONS OVER THE EVIL WHICH HAS COME..	463-467
---	---------

CHAPTER IV.

JERUSALEM'S SUFFERINGS FOR HER SIN; SUFFERINGS OF THE PROPHETS AND PRIESTS; THE VAIN TRUSTS OF THE PEOPLE; LIGHT AT EVENING.....	467-470
--	---------

CHAPTER V.

THE GENERAL DISTRESS; INDIVIDUALIZING ILLUSTRATIONS; THE PRAYER.....	470-472
--	---------

LAMENTATIONS OF JEREMIAH.

CHAPTER I.

HOW doth the city sit solitary, *that was full of people!* ^a*how* is she become as a widow! she *that was* great among the nations, *and* ^b*princess* among the provinces, *how* is she become tributary! **2** She ^c*weepeth* sore in the ^d*night*, and her tears *are* on her cheeks: ^e*among* all her lovers ^f*she* hath none to comfort *her*: all her friends have dealt treacherously with her, they are become her enemies. **3** ^g*Judah* is gone into

^a Isa. 47. 7, 8. — ^b Ezra 4. 20. — ^c Jer. 13. 17. — ^d Job 7. 3; Psa. 6. 6. — ^e Jer. 4. 30; 30. 14; verse 19. — ^f Verses 9, 16, 17, 21. — ^g Jer. 52. 27.

CHAPTER I.

THE MISERIES DESCRIBED, 1-11.

1. As a widow—Jerusalem is personified as a desolate woman, deprived of children and husband, neglected by her lovers and betrayed by her friends. It is an interesting fact, that the image of this verse is the one chosen for the coin of Titus, struck to commemorate his triumph over Jerusalem, which shows a woman weeping under a palm tree, and the inscription, "Judea Capta." The real structure of this first verse is disguised in the English Version, as also in the Masoretic pointing. The reading should be:

How sitteth she alone, the city full of people!
She has become like a widow (that was) great
among the nations!
A princess among provinces, she has become
a vassal.

The exclamation point in the English Version after "widow" should be removed to stand after **nations**, and the **and** introduced by the translators should be returned to the nothingness whence it sprung.

2. Weepeth ... in the night—

captivity because of affliction, and ¹because of great servitude: ²*she* dwelleth among the heathen, she findeth no rest: all her persecutors overtook her between the straits. **4** The ways of Zion do mourn, because none come to the solemn feasts: all her gates are desolate: her priests sigh, her virgins are afflicted, and she *is* in bitterness. **5** Her adversaries ¹are the chief, her enemies prosper; for the Lord hath afflicted her ²for the multitude of her transgressions:

¹ Heb. *for the greatness of servitude.* —
² Deut. 28. 64, 65; chap. 2. 9. — ³ Deut. 28. 43, 44.
⁴ Jer. 30. 14, 15; Dan. 9. 7, 16.

"Night" is mentioned, not as excluding, but rather including, day. Her grief is so poignant that her tears do not cease to flow even in the night time, which ought to be a season of rest and oblivion of grief. **Lovers**—The nations friendly to the Jews; and, in general, all human comforts.

3. Because of affliction—The unendurable pressure of evil upon them in their own land has driven them into exile. **Between the straits**—The word here rendered "straits" is elsewhere translated "pain," "distress." See Psa. cxvi, 3, and cxviii, 5. The idea is, that her **persecutors** came upon her when unable either to resist or flee.

4. Ways of Zion—That is, the roads and highways leading to Zion. **Do mourn**—Because they are no longer trodden by the pilgrims going up to the **solemn feasts**, the pass-over, pentecost, and tabernacles. **Virgins** are mentioned as bearing a part in the religious services. See Jer. xxxi, 13, and Psa. lxxviii, 25.

5. Are the chief—The mighty, and therefore rule her. **Prosper**—Literally, *are at rest*; an expressive figure.

her ¹ children are gone into captivity before the enemy. **6** And from the daughter of Zion all her beauty is departed: her princes are become like harts ^{that} find no pasture, and they are gone without strength before the pursuer. **7** Jerusalem remembered in the days of her affliction and of her miseries all her ² pleasant things that she had in the days of old, when her people fell into the hand of the enemy, and none did help her: the adversaries saw her, and did mock at her sabbaths. **8** ^m Jerusalem hath grievously sinned; therefore she ³ is removed: all that honoured her despise her, because ^a they have seen her nakedness: yea, she sigheth, and turn-

eth backward. **9** Her filthiness *is* in her skirts; she ^o remembereth not her last end; therefore she came down wonderfully: ^p she had no comforter. **10** O Lord, behold my affliction: for the enemy hath magnified *himself*. **11** The adversary hath spread out his hand upon ^a all her ⁴ pleasant things: for she hath seen *that* ^t the heathen entered into her sanctuary, whom thou didst command *that* ^s they should not enter into thy congregation. **11** All her people sigh, ^t they seek bread; they have given their pleasant things for meat ⁵ to relieve the soul: see, O Lord, and consider; for I am become vile.

12 ⁶ *Is it* nothing to you, all ye that

^l Jer. 52. 28. — ² Or, *desirable*, verse 10. — ^m 1 Kings 8. 46. — ³ Heb. *is become a removing*, or, *wandering*. — ⁿ Jer. 13. 22, 26; Ezek. 16. 37; 23. 29; Hosea 2. 10. — ^o Deut. 32. 29; Isa. 47. 7.

^p Verses 2, 17, 21. — ^q Verse 7. — ⁴ Or, *desirable*. — ^r Jer. 51. 51. — ^s Deut. 23. 3; Neh. 13. 1. — ^t Jer. 38. 9; 52. 6; chap. 2. 12; 4. 4. — ⁵ Or, *to make the soul to come again*. — ⁶ Or, *It is nothing*.

Children ... before the enemy — In ancient sculptures such mournful processions of women and tender children are often engraved.

6. Like harts — Like helpless, frightened deer, they flee exhausted before the **pursuer** in a desert land where they find **no pasture**.

7. Remembered — Rather, *remembers*. The keenest arrows which pierce the soul in the time of calamity are carried in the quiver of memory. **Miseries** — Literally, *wanderings*. The term suggests a condition of homelessness, and so it is more vivid and expressive than the term in our Version.

Did mock at her sabbaths — Even in this period of captivity and desolation the law of the "sabbath" will be kept, and because of it they will be subjected to reproach and ridicule.

8. Is removed — More correctly, *is become an abomination*; and so it expresses the key-thought of this verse and the following. **She sigheth, and turneth backward** — As a modest woman would do from shame.

9. Skirts — More exactly, the *train* of the long flowing robe. And so the meaning is, that the personal defilement is no longer concealed, but revoltingly conspicuous. **Came down wonderfully** — Sometimes the sad contrasts of human life are so startling that we instinctively accept them as judgments from God.

10. Pleasant things — Not only "pleasant," but precious, meaning the vessels of the sanctuary, and also their individual treasures. **They should not enter**, etc. — Those who might not enter even the **congregation** for the purpose of worship now penetrate even into the **sanctuary** to rob and destroy.

11. Have given their pleasant things for meat, etc. — An eloquent suggestion of the terrible exigencies of the siege. "All that a man hath, will he give for his life."

LAMENTATIONS IN VIEW OF PRESENT MISERIES, 12-22.

12. Thus far the misery of Jerusalem is predicted. With consummate art the writer now makes us hear the lamentations of this widow sitting in the solitude of her deep and bitter grief. **Is it nothing to you**, etc. — Literally, *not to you, all ye wayfarers*. The fact that the Hebrew often dispenses with the use of the interrogative particle makes this passage capable of some variety of interpretation, and this is reflected in the Versions. The Vulgate, Targum, and probably the Septuagint, depart from the Masoretic pointing, and render substantially, "I adjure you, all ye that pass by, turn aside and see, etc." But the rendering of the English Version is by all means to be preferred. The pathos of this verse is touching indeed.

⁷ pass by? behold, and see "if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the LORD hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger. **13** From above hath he sent fire into my bones, and it prevaieth against them: he hath ^v spread a net for my feet, he hath turned me back: he hath made me desolate and faint all the day. **14** ^w The yoke of my transgressions is bound by his hand: they are wreathed, and come up upon my neck: he hath made my strength to fall, the LORD hath delivered me into *their* hands, *from whom* I am not able to rise up. **15** The LORD hath trodden under foot all my mighty men in the midst of me: he hath called an assembly against me to crush my young men: ^x the LORD hath trodden ^a the virgin, the daughter of Judah, as in a winepress. **16** For these things I weep; ^y mine eye, mine eye runneth down with water, because ^z the comforter that should ^a relieve my soul is far from me: my children are desolate, because the enemy prevailed.

⁷ Heb. *pass by the way*.—^u Dan. 9. 12.—^v Ezek. 12. 13; 17. 20.—^w Deut. 28. 48.—^x Isa. 63. 3; Rev. 14. 19, 20; 19. 15.—^y Or, *the winepress of the virgin*, etc.—^z Jer. 13. 17; 14. 17; chap. 2. 18.—^a Verses 2, 9.—^b Heb. *bring back*.—^c Jer. 4. 31.—^d Verses 2, 9.—^e Neh. 9. 33; Dan. 9. 7, 14.

13. From above—It is the fire of God, and so penetrates even to the bones. **Hath turned me back**—Hath hedged up every avenue of escape, so that the poor victim recoils in sheer hopelessness.

14. Yoke of my transgressions—The "yoke" formed by my sins. This is described as bound by the hand of God, who causeth the sin of every man to find him out. **Wreathed**—Interwoven, knotted together.

15. The Lord—Here, and in thirteen other places, we have *Adonai*, while the name Jehovah is less prominent, "as if in their punishment the people felt the lordship of the Deity more, and his covenant love to them less." **Hath trodden under foot**—More literally, *hath taken away*, or, as yet others translate, *hath made contemptible*. **Called an assembly**—More literally, with Gesenius, Keil, and most others, *proclaim a festival*. To this festival God invites the nations to crush the young men of Jerusalem. **Hath trodden the virgin**,

17 ^a Zion spreadeth forth her hands, and ^b there is none to comfort her: the LORD hath commanded concerning Jacob, that his adversaries should be round about him: Jerusalem is as a menstruous woman among them.

18 The LORD is ^c righteous; for I have ^d rebelled against his ^e commandment: hear, I pray you, all people, and behold my sorrow; my virgins and my young men are gone into captivity. **19** I called for my lovers, *but* ^f they deceived me: my priests and mine elders gave up the ghost in the city, ^g while they sought their meat to relieve their souls.

20 Behold, O LORD; for I *am* in distress: my ^h bowels are troubled; mine heart is turned within me; for I have grievously rebelled: ⁱ abroad the sword bereaveth, at home *there is* as death.

21 They have heard that I sigh; ^j there is none to comfort me: all mine enemies have heard of my trouble: they are glad that thou hast done *it*: thou wilt bring ^k the day that thou hast ^l called, and they shall be like unto me. **22** ^m Let all

^d 1 Samuel 12. 14, 15.—^e Hebrew, *mouth*.—^f Verse 2; Jeremiah 30. 14.—^g Verse 11.—^h Job 30. 27; Isaiah 16. 11; Jeremiah 4. 19; 48. 36; chapter 2. 11; Hosea 11. 8.—ⁱ Deut. 32. 25; Ezekiel 7. 15.—^j Verse 2.—^k Isaiah 13, etc.; Jer. 46, etc.—^l Or, *proclaimed*.—^m l Psal. 109. 15.

etc.—Better, *hath trodden the winepress for the virgin*.

17. Spreadeth forth her hands—In supplication of help; but instead of comforters the LORD hath commanded that she shall find only adversaries. **Jerusalem is as**, etc.—The language is nearly identical with that in verse 8, and should be rendered, *Jerusalem hath become an abomination among them*.

18. All people—Better, *all peoples*.

19. I called for, etc.—Rather, *I called to, my lovers*. **Priests and ... elders**—The men to whom the people should have recourse in times of trouble: the former as representing the community before God, and being the medium of his grace; and the latter as the leaders in civil matters. Even these have pined away while they sought (in vain) their meat to relieve their souls.

20. Abroad the sword...at home ...as death—Why "as" is introduced here does not clearly appear, but the general thought is plain.

their wickedness come before thee; and do unto them, as thou hast done unto me for all my transgressions: for my sighs *are* many, and ^m my heart *is* faint.

CHAPTER II.

HOW hath the Lord covered the daughter of Zion with a cloud in his anger, ^a and cast down from heaven unto the earth ^b the beauty of Israel, and remembered not ^c his footstool in the day of his anger! **2** The Lord hath swallowed up all the habitations of Jacob, ^d and hath not pitied: he hath thrown down in his wrath the strong holds of the daughter of Judah; he hath ^e brought *them* down to the ground: ^f he hath polluted the kingdom and the

^m Chap. 5. 17. — ^a Matt. 11. 23. — ^b 2 Sam. 1. 19. — ^c 1 Chron. 28. 2; Psa. 99. 5; 132. 7. — ^d Verses 17, 21; chap. 3. 43. — ^e 1 Heb. *made to touch*. — ^f Psa. 89. 39. — ^g Psa. 74. 11. — ^g Psa. 89. 46.

CHAPTER II.

THE JUDGMENT, 1-10.

1. Covered—The original is a denomination from the noun for **cloud**, so that the literal rendering is, *How doeth the Lord becloud with a cloud the daughter of Zion!* God's anger settles down on Jerusalem like a dark thundercloud. By **daughter of Zion** (and **beauty of Israel**) Jerusalem is meant, containing, as it did, the "holy and beautiful house," the temple, and the ark, which was his **footstool**. **Cast down**—Not, as some have suggested, by the launching of a thunderbolt, but rather as a star is cast down from heaven.

2. The Lord . . . hath not pitied—Such a clause as this illustrates one characteristic feature of the Hebrew language, which, having few adjectives and adverbs, resorts to various expedients to supply the deficiency. Here a sentence is used for an adverb, the whole being equivalent to some such word as *unsparingly* or *unpityingly*. **Habitations of Jacob**—The word rendered "habitations," means the places where the shepherds stay, and so includes not only dwellings but especially pasture grounds. These are **swallowed up**, or destroyed, showing that the ruin spreads from Jerusalem into the whole country round about. **Polluted**—Reduced it from its high

princes thereof. **3** He hath cut off in *his* fierce anger all the horn of Israel: ^h he hath drawn back his right hand from before the enemy, ⁱ and he burned against Jacob like a flaming fire, *which* devoureth round about. **4** ^j He hath bent his bow like an enemy: he stood with his right hand as an adversary, and slew ^k all *that were* pleasant to the eye in the tabernacle of the daughter of Zion: he poured out his fury like fire. **5** ^l The Lord was as an enemy: he hath swallowed up Israel, ^m he hath swallowed up all her palaces: he hath destroyed his strong holds, and hath increased in the daughter of Judah mourning and lamentation. **6** And he hath violently ⁿ taken away his ^o tabernacle, ^p as *if* it

^h Isa. 63. 10; verse 5. — ⁱ 2 Heb. *all the desirable of the eye*. — ^j Ezek. 24. 25. — ^k Verse 4; Jer. 30. 14. — ^l 2 Kings 25. 9; Jer. 52. 13. — ^m Psa. 80. 12; 89. 40; Isa. 5. 5. — ⁿ 3 Or, *hedge*. — ^o Isa. 1. 8.

and distinguishing glory to be a common and unclean thing.

3. Cut off . . . the horn—Symbolizing all offensive and defensive power. Among a people so simple and so near to nature "the horn" would be a most natural and expressive symbol of dominion and power. In drawing **back his right hand from before the enemy** he withdrew his providence and help, while the following clause implies that he had become the "arch-enemy of Jacob."

4. His right hand as an adversary—That same "hand" which had been to them an instrument of help, and which is mentioned in the previous verse as withdrawn from their protection. **In the tabernacle, etc.**—This phrase belongs to the sentence following. The colon after "Zion" should be moved back to stand after "eye." Fearful, indeed, is the contrast when, instead of the down-shining of the Lord's favour and glory, he pours out upon the tabernacle of Zion **his fury like fire**.

5. Her palaces . . . his strongholds—The change of gender here is explained by Keil by the fact that when the "palaces," or, more correctly, *citadels*, are mentioned, the city is in the mind of the writer, but when the "strongholds" are mentioned he was thinking of the whole country, Judah.

6. He hath . . . taken away his

were of a garden; he hath destroyed his places of the assembly: °the Lord hath caused the solemn feasts and sabbaths to be forgotten in Zion, and hath despised in the indignation of his anger the king and the priest. 7 The Lord hath cast off his altar, he hath abhorred his sanctuary, he hath 4given up into the hand of the enemy the walls of her palaces; °they have made a noise in the house of the Lord, as in the day of a solemn feast. 8 The Lord hath purposed to destroy the wall of the daughter of Zion: °he hath stretched out a line, he hath not withdrawn his hand from °destroying: therefore he made the rampart and the wall to lament; they languished together. ■ Her gates are sunk into the ground; he hath destroyed and °broken her bars: °her

o Chap. 1. 4; Zeph. 3. 18. — 4 Heb. *shut up*. — p Psa. 74. 4. — q 2 Kings 21. 13; Isa. 34. 11. — 5 Heb. *scallowing up*. — 7 Jer. 51. 30. — s Deut. 28. 36; 2 Kings 24. 15; 25. 7; chap. 1. 3; 4. 20. — t 2 Chron. 15. 3.

tabernacle — Slight inaccuracies in our Version in this verse, and in many others in this book, almost completely conceal the poetic diction of the original. The word rendered “tabernacle” is not the same which appears in verse 4, but means rather a temporary enclosure or shelter, as a hedge or booth. It should also be noticed that the original for **places of the assembly** and **solemn feasts** is one and the same word. The translation then should be something as follows:

And he hath violently treated, as a garden, his booth, he hath destroyed his festival: Jehovah hath caused to be forgotten in Zion festival and sabbath; And in the fierceness of his wrath he hath rejected king and priest.

The phrase as . . . a garden is obscure, but probably contains some intimation of temporariness and facility.

7. **Altar . . . sanctuary . . . walls of her palaces**—These are parts of the house of the Lord. The noise which the enemy makes therein is the shout of triumph and exultation.

8. **Wall of the daughter of Zion**—Walls of Jerusalem. The line which had been stretched out for the purpose of erection is now used for the purpose of destruction, and thus is suggested the precision and thoroughness of the work.

king and her princes are among the Gentiles: ‘the law is no more;’ her “prophets also find no vision from the Lord. 10 The elders of the daughter of Zion sit upon the ground, and keep silence: they have “cast up dust upon their heads; they have “girded themselves with sackcloth: the virgins of Jerusalem hang down their heads to the ground. 11 Mine eyes do fail with tears, “my bowels are troubled, “my liver is poured upon the earth, for the destruction of the daughter of my people; because “the children and the sucklings “swoon in the streets of the city. 12 They say to their mothers, Where is corn and wine? when they swooned as the wounded in the streets of the city, when their soul was poured out into their mothers’ bosom. 13 What thing

u Psa. 74. 9; Ezek. 7. 26. — v Job 2. 13; Isa. 3. 26; chap. 3. 28. — w Job 2. 12. — x Isa. 15. 3; Ezek. 7. 18; 27. 31. — y Psa. 6. 7; chap. 3. 48, etc. — z Chap. 1. 20. — a Job 16. 12; Isa. 22. 14. — b Verse 19; chap. 4. 4. — c Or, *faint*.

9. **Law is no more . . . no vision from the Lord**—Thus the first, as it is also the last, grand distinguishing glory of Israel disappears. The “law” and prophecy, or “vision,” were the grand, all-comprehending distinctions of the Jewish people—the germs out of which all the forms of their life grew.

THE LAMENTATION, 11-16.

11, 12. **Liver is poured . . . earth**—This language occurs nowhere else in the Old Testament, and the exact force of it is doubtful. “My soul is poured out” occurs in two passages, but this is easier. It would seem that “the liver” is taken as representing the large viscera, usually classed together under the general name of bowels, and regarded as the seat of the emotions. If so, the expression means that he could no longer restrain his feelings; that his grief must have vent in expression. **Swoon**—Rather, *faint*; or, with Keil, *pine away*. No feature of the common calamity—the utter desolation of the people—is more graphic or more painful than the falling down of the children in the street from hunger, and their pitiful and oft repeated cry, **Where is corn and wine?** until they finally expire in the arms of their miserable mothers.

13. **What thing, etc.**—All words

shall I take to witness for thee? ^c what thing shall I liken to thee, O daughter of Jerusalem? what shall I equal to thee, that I may comfort thee, O virgin daughter of Zion? for thy breach is great like the sea: who can heal thee? **14** Thy ^a prophets have seen vain and foolish things for thee: and they have not ^c discovered thine iniquity, to turn away thy captivity: but have seen for thee false burdens and causes of banishment. **15** ^a All that pass ^b by ^c clap their hands at thee; they hiss ^b and wag their head at the daughter of Jerusalem, *saying, Is this the city that men call 'The perfection of beauty, The joy of the whole earth?'* **16** ^a All thine enemies have opened their mouth against thee: they hiss and gnash the teeth: they say, 'We have swallowed her up: certainly this is the day that we looked for; we have

^c Chap. 1. 12; Dan. 9. 12. — ^d Jer. 2. 8; 5. 31; 14. 14; 23. 16; 27. 14; 29. 8, 9; Ezek. 13. 2. — ^e Isa. 58. 1. — ^f 1 Kings 9. 8; Jer. 18. 16; Nahum 3. 19. — ^g Heb. *by the way*. — ^h Ezek. 25. 6. — ⁱ 2 Kings 18. 21; Psa. 44. 14. — ^j Psa. 48. 2; 50. 2. — ^k Job 16. 9, 10; Psa. 22. 13; chap. 3. 46. — ^l Psa. 56. 2.

fail. No comparison is adequate. No comfort meets the case. Your misery is **great like the sea**, illimitable, overpassing all measure.

14. Thy prophets—This is in continuation of the preceding verse. The false prophets had indeed cried "Peace, peace," but there was no peace. **False burdens**—The term burden is often technical in the sense of prophecies of a minatory character, but this is not the easiest sense in this place. True, as Keil suggests, it may mean threatening of evil against the enemies of Israel, but this would be no burden to the Jews. It is better to regard this word here as used in a more general sense, "oracles of deceit." **Causes of banishment**—Literally, *expulsions*. The original is a single word.

15. Clap their hands—An expression of delight at the calamity of the people. They **wag their head** as did the Jews in derision of the crucified Christ.

THE CALL TO PRAYER, 17-19.

17. Devised—Better, *purposed*. This calamity was no fortuitous event, neither was it a mere devise of Jehovah, but simply the moving forward of the chariot-wheels of the divine adminis-

tration. ^m we have seen *it*. **17** The Lord hath done *that* which he had ⁿ devised; he hath fulfilled his word that he had commanded in the days of old: ^o he hath thrown down, and hath not pitied: and he hath caused *thine* enemy to ^p rejoice over thee, he hath set up the horn of thine adversaries. **18** Their heart cried unto the Lord, O ^q wall of the daughter of Zion, ^r let tears run down like a river day and night: give thyself no rest; let not the apple of thine eye cease. **19** Arise, ^s cry out in the night: in the beginning of the watches ^t pour out thine heart like water before the face of the Lord: lift up thy hands toward him for the life of thy young children, ^u that faint for hunger ^v in the top of every street.

20 Behold, O Lord, and consider to whom thou hast done this. ^w Shall the

^m Psa. 35. 21. — ⁿ Lev. 26. 16, etc.; Deut. 28. 15, etc. — ^o Verse 2. — ^p Psa. 38. 16; 89. 42. — ^q Verse 8. — ^r Jer. 11. 17; chap. 1. 16. — ^s Psa. 119. 147. — ^t Psa. 62. 8. — ^u Verse 11. — ^v Isa. 51. 20; chap. 4. 1; Nahum 3. 10. — ^w Lev. 26. 29; Deut. 28. 53; Jer. 19. 9; chap. 4. 10; Ezek. 5. 10.

tration. The Jewish nation had persisted in placing themselves and their interests in the way of these, and so, of course, the inevitable result must be *ruin*.

18. Their heart—Namely, the people, who are literally driven to pray for mercy. The apparent lack of logical coherence as to the order is due to the emotional character of the whole poem. **O wall . . . let tears run down**, etc.—Similar is the language of Isaiah xiv, 31, "Howl, O gate." Of course there is in both places a kind of double metonymy—the wall or gate for the city, and the city for the inhabitants. Let the weeping be uninterrupted **day and night**—perpetual. **Let not the apple of thine eye cease**, means, let not the fount of thy tears be dried up.

19. Cry out in the night—Better, *wail*. Not a cry for relief, but a wail of distress, is meant.

THE PRAYER, 20-22.

20. Behold, O Lord, etc.—The prayer of the prophet. The fearful picture has been seen, the cries of distress and agony have been heard, and the prophet weaves out of them an argument of prayer. **To whom thou**

women eat their fruit, and children ^s of a span long? ^v shall the priest and the prophet be slain in the sanctuary of the Lord? **21** ^w The young and the old lie on the ground in the streets: my virgins and my young men are fallen by the sword; thou hast slain *them* in the day of thine anger: ^x thou hast killed, and not pitied. **22** Thou hast called as in a solemn day ^y my terrors round about, so that in the day of the Lord's anger none escaped nor remained: ^z those that I have swaddled and brought up hath mine enemy consumed.

I **CHAPTER III.**
AM the man *that* hath seen affliction

⁸ Or, *swaddled with their hands*.—^v Chap. 4. 13, 16.—^w 2 Chron. 36. 17.—^x Chap. 3. 43.—^y Psa. 31. 13; Jer. 6. 25; 46. 5.—^z Hosea 9. 12, 13.—^a Job 16. 8.

hast done this—An appeal to that covenant upon which their very existence was based. **Their fruit**—That is, the fruit of their body. **Children of a span long**—Children of their tender care; the word being from a verb, נָסַךְ, which means to care for tenderly.

21. Young and . . . old—More literally, *boy and old man*.

22. My terrors round about—These are the sword, famine, and plagues which had apparently combined for the destruction of the people.

CHAPTER III.

PERSONAL LAMENTATION FOR GRIEVOUS SUFFERINGS, 1-18.

1. I am the man—Jeremiah speaks out of his personal experience, and thus individualizes the common misery. What he writes was literally and exactly true of himself; but it was also a type and a specimen of what was true in the case of many others. But he writes not so much as the representative of the people in general as of those devout and faithful ones who continued to be held together by the bond of a common faith as well as by the pressure of a common misery.

2. Darkness—Calamity. **Light**—Prosperity.

3. Surely against me—This verse is idiomatic and intense. *Surely against me hath he turned his hand again and*

by the rod of his wrath. **2** He hath led me, and brought me *into* darkness, but not *into* light. **3** Surely against me is he turned; he turneth his hand *against* me all the day. **4** ^a My flesh and my skin hath he made old; he hath ^b broken my bones. **5** He hath builded against me, and compassed me with gall and travail. **6** ^c He hath set me in dark places, as *they that be* dead of old. **7** ^d He hath hedged me about, that I cannot get out; he hath made my chain heavy. **8** Also ^e when I cry and shout, he shutteth out my prayer. **9** He hath enclosed my ways with hewn stone; he hath made my paths crooked. **10** ^f He was unto me as a bear lying in wait, and

^b Psa. 51. 8; Isa. 38. 13; Jer. 50. 17.—^c Psa. 88. 5, 6; 143. 3.—^d Job 3. 23; 19. 8; Hosea 2. 6.—^e Job 30. 20; Psa. 22. 2.—^f Job 10. 16; Isa. 38. 13; Hosea 5. 14; 13. 7, 8.

again all the day long. “His hand is the smiting of God.” (Keil.)

4. Flesh and . . . skin . . . made old—The verb means to wear out by rubbing. **Flesh, skin, and bones** make up the whole body; the softer and the firmer parts.

5. Hath builded against me—As besiegers enclose a city. **Gall and travail**—A most extraordinary combination surely, but not unlike Jeremiah. “Gall” is the name of a bitter plant which has come to be synonymous with keen suffering, and so it seems to be used here co-ordinate with “travail.”

6. Dark places—Literally, *in darkness*; that is, in sheol. **Dead of old**—Literally, *dead of eternity*; namely, those who shall never return to life.

7. Chain—Literally, *brass*. The figure is that of a prisoner shut up in an enclosure and loaded with heavy fetters.

9. Hewn stones would be of considerable size, and employed to make a strong wall. The term **enclosed** is the same as “hedged” in verse 7. **Made my paths crooked**—Rather, *he hath turned aside my paths*, so that I cannot go forward.

10. As a bear . . . in wait—This is one of several allusions in the poetical and prophetic books, harmonizing with certain passages in the historical books, such as 1 Sam. xvii. 34, 36, 37, 2 Sam. xvii. 8, which imply that in Old

as a lion in secret places. **11** He hath turned aside my ways, and ^apulled me in pieces: he hath made me desolate. **12** He hath bent his bow, and ^bset me as a mark for the arrow. **13** He hath caused ^cthe ^darrows of his quiver to enter into my reins. **14** I was a ^ederision to all my people; and ^ftheir song all the day. **15** ^gHe hath filled me with ^hbitterness, he hath made me drunken with wormwood. **16** He hath also broken my teeth ⁱwith gravel stones, he hath ^jcovered me with ashes.

^g Hosea 6. 1. — ^h Job 7. 20; 16. 12; Psa. 38. 2. — ⁱ Job 6. 4. — ^j Heb. sons. — ^k Jer. 20. 7. — ^l Job 30. 9; Psa. 69. 12; verse 63. — ^m Jer. 9. 15. — ⁿ Heb. bitteresses. — ^o Prov. 20. 17.

Testament times the bear was a common animal in this land. The figure of "a bear lying in wait" occurs only here. Nägelsbach renders: *A lurking bear was he to me, a lion in ambush.*

11. Pulled . . . in pieces—The figure of a beast of prey still continues. He turns him from the path and tears him "in pieces."

12. Bent his bow—From the wild beast which is hunted the figure now changes to the hunter, who is armed with bow and arrow. So the intensity of the whole passage is promoted. Not only the beast of prey, but also the hunter, is against him.

13. Arrows of his quiver—Better, as the margin, *sons* "of his quiver." These are, of course, the ill's and misfortunes sent upon him by God.

14. My people—"There is no reason, but the contrary, for changing (with Ewald) 'my people' into *peoples*." —R. PAYNE SMITH, in the *Speaker's Commentary*. So also Keil, Nägelsbach, Gerlach, and others. That even these fearful judgments, so clearly foretold and fully identified as from God, did not subdue and turn the people from their obstinacy and rebellion, and bring them to see the prophet in his true character, is sufficiently evident from Jer. xli, 1, etc., xliii, 2, and numerous other passages. In the case of such as Jeremiah the bitterness of personal hate and persecution was added to the common burden of sorrow and disappointment.

16. Broken my teeth with gravel stones—Either mixed with bread, or

17 And thou hast removed my soul far off from peace: I forgot ^aprosperity. **18** ^bAnd I said, My strength and my hope is perished from the LORD: **19** ^cRemembering mine affliction and my misery, ^dthe wormwood and the gall. **20** My soul hath *them* still in remembrance, and is ^ehumbled in me. **21** This I ^frecall to my mind, therefore have I hope.

22 ^gIt is of the LORD's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. **23** *They are new*

³ Or, *rolled me in the ashes.* — ⁴ Heb. *good.* — ⁵ Psa. 31. 22. — ⁶ Or, *Remember.* — ⁷ Jer. 9. 15. — ⁸ Heb. *bowed.* — ⁹ Heb. *make to return to my heart.* — ¹⁰ Mal. 3. 6.

rather, as Keil prefers, stones given instead of bread. **He hath covered me with ashes**—Literally, *hath pressed me down in ashes.* The Septuagint Version renders it, *he hath given me ashes to eat.*

17. Hast removed my soul far off from peace—Other renderings of this verse have been proposed, but this is to be preferred, and is really beautiful. It is substantially a quotation from Psa. lxxxviii, 14, and its very quietness and simplicity are pathetic. The tide of the common ruin had borne the complainer far away from the peace and prosperity which Israel had once known.

PIOUS ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY AND MERCY, 19-39.

19. Remembering—Better, *remember*, as in the margin. The verb is an infinitive, as in the fourth commandment. **Affliction, misery, wormwood, and gall** are reminiscences of chapter i.

21. This . . . therefore—Referring to the affliction and humble prayer of the prophet. His weakness and sore need lead him to hope for God's interposing strength.

22. We are not consumed—"We," here, takes the place of I without any marked transition, suggesting, as above intimated, that the prophet in what goes before identifies himself with the people.

23. New every morning—That is, Jehovah's mercies are "new," or repeated.

every morning: great is thy faithfulness. **24** The LORD is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in him. **25** The LORD is good unto them that wait for him, to the soul that seeketh him. **26** It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the LORD. **27** It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth. **28** He sitteth alone and keepeth silence, because he hath borne it upon him. **29** He putteth his mouth in the dust; if so be there may be hope. **30** He giveth his cheek to him that smiteth him: he is filled full

^r Isa. 33. 2.—^s Psal. 16. 5; 73. 26; 119. 57; Jer. 10. 16.—^t Psal. 130. 6; Isa. 30. 18; Micah 7. 7.—^u Psal. 37. 7.—^v Psal. 94. 12; 119. 71.—^w Jer. 15. 17; chap. 2. 10.—^x Job 42. 6.

24. The LORD is my portion—

An almost *verbatim* quotation from Psalm cxix, 57, which is also substantially identical with several other passages.

25-27. Good—This teth (ו) verse has each of its clauses commencing with "good." The present verse division serves somewhat to conceal the structure—*Good is Jehovah; Good that man hope and wait; and, Good that he bear the yoke in his youth.*

26. Hope and quietly wait, etc.—More literally, *It is good both to wait and be silent*=silently wait. Keil renders it: *It is good that he should wait, and in silence too, for the help of God.* The point is, that he should not only wait, but abstain from murmurings and repinings. This also prepares for the thought of the following verse, for he who has patiently submitted to sufferings in his youth will not readily sink in despair in old age, but will be likely to exercise himself in a calm waiting on God.

28-30. He sitteth—The verbs commencing these verses are apocopated futures, and should be rendered with a passive sense, as: *Let him sit alone and keep silence; Let him put his mouth in the dust; Let him give his cheek, etc.* The second clause of verse 28 should read: *For He (God) hath laid on him the burden.* "There is a certain gradation in the three verses that is quite unmistakable. The sitting alone and in silence is comparatively the easiest; it is harder to place the mouth in the

with reproach. **31** For the Lord will not cast off for ever: **32** But though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies. **33** For he doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men. **34** To crush under his feet all the prisoners of the earth, **35** To turn aside the right of a man before the face of the Most High, **36** To subvert a man in his cause, the Lord approveth not.

37 Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not? **38** Out of the mouth of the

^y Isa. 50. 6; Matt. 5. 39.—^z Psal. 94. 14.—^a Ezek. 33. 11; Heb. 12. 10.—^b Heb. *from his heart*.—^c Or, *a superior*.—^d Hab. 1. 13.—^e Or, *seeth not*.—^f Psal. 33. 9.

dust, and yet cling to hope; it is most difficult of all to give the cheek to the smiter, and to satiate one's self with dishonour."—Keil.

31-33. As the three members of the division commencing with the 25th verse all begin with the adjective "good," so the following three verses contain exhortations based on these; and in these three verses we also have the considerations or grounds of comfort by which these exhortations are enforced. These are: 1) Sorrow will come to an end, verse 31. 2) God's compassion outweighs sorrow, verse 32. 3) His love shines through all. "He doth not willingly afflict," verse 33.

34-36. To crush...to turn aside...to subvert, etc.—The infinitive form of the three verses, all of which depend on the clause with which the last verse terminates, is well fitted to bring out vividly and incisively the practices which are here condemned. The mention of these implies the writer's acquaintance with them as facts of human experience. Probably in the fearful time of Jerusalem's downfall Jeremiah had personally witnessed the trampling under foot of prisoners of war; as in the corrupt and evil times in which his lot was cast he had repeatedly seen justice perverted, as specified in verses 35 and 36.

37, 38. Who is he, etc.—From the mercy of God, the writer proceeds to his absolute sovereignty—a sovereignty so perfect as that no man saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord

Most High proceedeth not ^devil and good? **39** ^eWherefore doth a living man ¹¹complain, ^fa man for the punishment of his sins? **40** Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord. **41** ^gLet us lift up our heart with *our* hands unto God in the heavens. **42** ^hWe have transgressed and have rebelled: thou hast not pardoned. **43** Thou hast covered with anger, and persecuted us: ⁱthou hast slain, thou hast not pitied. **44** Thou hast covered thyself with a cloud, ^kthat our prayer should not pass through. **45** Thou hast

^d Job 2. 10; Isa. 45. 7; Amos 3. 6. — ^e Prov. 19. 3. — ¹¹ Or, *murmur*. — ^f Micah 7. 9. — ^g Psa. 86. 4. — ^h Dan. 9. 5. — ⁱ Chap. 2. 2, 17, 21. — ^k Verse 8. — ^l 1 Cor. 4. 13. — ^m Chap. 2. 16.

commandeth it not, and from it proceedeth not evil and good.

39. Living man—"Living" is emphatic. There is some difficulty as to the last clause of this verse, which has led to different translations. The word rendered **punishment of his sins**, has for its first and ordinary meaning sin; then the punishment for sin. The better rendering, then, seems to be, *Why doth a living man complain?* *Let him sorrow for his sin.*

CONFESSION OF SIN, AND LAMENTATIONS OVER THE EVIL WHICH HAS COME, 40-66.

40. Let us search . . . our ways—As Rosenmüller long ago wrote, "when our sufferings arise from our sins we should search out and correct our faults." The closing thought of the previous triplet prepares for this, which consists of exhortation to reformation and amendment. **Turn . . . to the Lord**—The preposition here is not, as we would expect, *el*, (*ל*), but *ol*, (*על*) in which lurks an emphasis which our Version does not express. *Turn as far as Jehovah*; not half way, but the whole, through conversion.

41. Lift up our heart . . . hands—As if the lifting up of the hands—outward, ceremonial prayer—were a matter of course. The real thing which is contingent, and which requires our watchful attention, is the lifting up of the "heart" also. The modifying clause, **God in the heavens**, is not

made us *as* the ¹offscouring and refuse in the midst of the people. **46** ^mAll our enemies have opened their mouths against us. **47** ⁿFear and a snare is come upon us, ^odesolation and destruction. **48** ^pMine eye runneth down with rivers of water for the destruction of the daughter of my people. **49** ^qMine eye trickleth down, and ceaseth not, without any intermission, **50** Till the Lord ^rlook down, and behold from heaven. **51** Mine eye affecteth ¹²mine heart, ¹³because of all the daughters of my city. **52** Mine enemies chased me sore,

ⁿ Isa. 24. 17; Jer. 48. 43. — ^o Isa. 51. 19. — ^p Jer. 4. 19; 9. 1; 14. 17; chap. 2. 11. — ^q Psa. 77. 2; chap. 1. 16. — ^r Isa. 63. 15. — ¹² Heb. *my soul*. — ¹³ Or, *more than all*.

merely for fulness, but also emphasis. The throne of his almightiness is "in the heavens," and out of the resources of his infinite power help may come.

42. Thou hast not pardoned—As in the preceding triplet, so here, we may have a transition to the section immediately following. The prophet reminds God that the people have been punished and not "pardoned," which is an appeal for him to stay his hand and fulfil his oft-repeated promise that he would again remember them for good.

43. Thou hast covered—That is, thyself. The verb means, not overwhelming, but clothing. The thought is the same in form with that of the following verse. As one puts on a coat of mail that he may enter the fight, so God puts on the covering of his wrath, out of which the lightnings leap forth unto destruction.

44. That our prayer should not pass through—The cloud conceals God in the more benignant and paternal aspects of his character, and, what is more alarming and discouraging, renders him impervious to prayer.

51. Mine eye affecteth, etc.—Literally, *Mine eye does evil to my soul*; that is, causeth pain to. **Because of all the daughters of my city**—Ewald and others understand by this the country towns round about Jerusalem; but it is a sufficient reply to this to say, that this interpretation is wholly without warrant of usage. The margin has for "because," *more than*;

like a bird, ¹ without cause. **53** They have cut off ² my life ³ in the dungeon, and ⁴ cast a stone upon me. **54** ⁵ Waters flowed over mine head; *then* ⁶ I said, I am cut off.

55 ⁷ I called upon thy name, O Lord, out of the low dungeon. **56** ⁸ Thou hast heard my voice: hide not thine ear at my breathing, at my cry. **57** Thou ⁹ drewest near in the day *that* I called upon thee: thou saidst, Fear not. **58** O Lord, thou hast ¹⁰ pleaded the causes of my soul; ¹¹ thou hast redeemed my life. **59** O Lord, thou hast seen my wrong: ¹² judge thou my cause. **60** Thou hast seen all their vengeance *and* all their ¹³ imaginations against me. **61** Thou hast heard their reproach, O Lord, *and* all their imaginations against me; **62** The lips of those that rose up against

me, and their device against me all the day. **63** Behold their ¹⁴ sitting down, and their rising up; ¹⁵ *I am* their music.

64 ¹⁶ Render unto them a recompense O Lord, according to the work of their hands. **65** Give them ¹⁷ sorrow of heart thy curse unto them. **66** Persecute and destroy them in anger ¹⁸ from under the ¹⁹ heavens of the Lord.

CHAPTER IV.

HOW is the gold become dim! *how* is the most fine gold changed! the stones of the sanctuary are poured out ² in the top of every street. **2** The precious sons of Zion, comparable to fine gold, how are they esteemed ³ as earthen pitchers, the work of the hands of the potter! **3** Even the ⁴ sea monsters draw out the breast, they give suck to their

¹ *Psalm* 35. 7, 19; 69. 4; 109. 3; 119. 161. — ² *Jer.* 37. 16; 38. 6, 9, 10. — ³ *Isaiah* 6. 17. — ⁴ *Psalm* 69. 2; 124. 4, 5. — ⁵ *Psalm* 31. 22; *Isaiah* 38. 10, 11; verse 18. — ⁶ *Psalm* 130. 1; *Jonah* 2. 2. — ⁷ *Psalm* 3. 4; 6. 8; 18. 6; 66. 19; 116. 1. — ⁸ *James* 4. 8. — ⁹ *Psalm* 35. 1; *Jer.* 51. 36. — ¹⁰ *Psalm* 71. 23.

¹¹ *Psalm* 9. 4; 35. 23. — ¹² *Jer.* 11. 19. — ¹³ *Psalm* 139. 2. — ¹⁴ *Verse* 14. — ¹⁵ *Psalm* 28. 4; see *Jer.* 11. 20; *2 Tim.* 4. 1. — ¹⁶ *Or, obstinacy of heart.* — ¹⁷ *Deut.* 25. 19; *Jer.* 10. 11. — ¹⁸ *1st Psalm* 8. 3. — ¹⁹ *Chap.* 2, 19. — ²⁰ *Isaiah* 50. 14; *Jer.* 19. 11; *2 Cor.* 4. 7. — ²¹ *Or, sea calves.*

but this, though admissible as a translation, is not to be preferred. The obvious meaning is the true one. The condition of the virgin daughters of an oriental city which had fallen into the power of the enemy was in these brutal times peculiarly deplorable.

52. Without cause—The order of the words in this verse should be, to express the precise sense of the original, “without cause mine enemies chased me.”

53. Cast a stone, etc.—They covered the pit in which the prophet was confined with a stone, to make escape hopeless.

54. Waters flowed—Figurative language, but such as would be very naturally suggested from the circumstance of using underground cisterns for dungeons. Jeremiah's troubles overwhelmed him, and his case was as hopeless as though “waters” had literally “flowed over” his head. This verse is, in thought, similar to that used by Jonah in chap. ii. 5.

55. Low dungeon, etc.—Here is evidently a reminiscence of the 88th psalm, in the sixth verse of which the same original words are rendered *lowest pit*. The meaning is not sheol, but the deep places.

56. Hide not, etc.—Literally, *hide*

not thine ear to my relief, to my cry: that is, turn not away from my cry.

CHAPTER IV.

JERUSALEM'S SUFFERINGS FOR HER SIN, 1–11.

1. Gold, fine gold, and holy stones are symbolical of “the precious sons of Zion,” of the verse following. The becoming *dim* betokens not merely the loss of outward glory, but also the decay of national character. It implies that this holy nation, this kingdom of priests, had surrendered its distinctive character and come down to sit in the common dust. **Stones of the sanctuary**—Literally, *stones of holiness*—holy stones. While the material of the temple, doubtless, suggested this imagery, yet it is *imagery*, and by no means refers to the literal gold and stones of the temple.

2. The phrase **precious sons of Zion** includes all the chosen people, and not merely a single class of them. These are here described as not only “precious,” but **comparable to fine gold**, literally, *weighed with solid gold*, implying that every one of them had been “worth his weight in gold.” But they have become worthless as the common potter's vessel!

3. Sea monsters—The original here

young ones: the daughter of my people *is become cruel*, ^c like the ostriches in the wilderness. 4 ^d The tongue of the sucking child cleaveth to the roof of his mouth for thirst: ^e the young children ask bread, and no man breaketh it unto them. 5 They that did feed delicately are desolate in the streets: they that were brought up in scarlet ^f embrace dunghills. 6 For the ^g punishment of the iniquity of the daughter of my people is greater than the punishment of the sin of Sodom, that was ^h overthrown as in a moment, and no hands stayed

^c Job 39, 14, 16. — ^d Psa. 22, 15. — ^e See chap. 2, 11, 12. — ^f Job 24, 8. — ^g 2 Or, *iniquity*. — ^h Gen. 19, 25.

has been mistaken in our Version. It is not *tannim*, "sea monsters," but *tannin*—*jacks*; and this harmonizes with the mention of ostriches in the last clause of the verse. **Cruel, like the ostriches**—Which fowl is, in Job xxxix, 13-17, used as "nature's type of unmotherhood." This popular belief, that the ostrich treats her young as if they were not hers, comes of the fact that her eggs are sometimes left to be hatched in the sand by the heat of the sun, and not by the warmth of her own body.

4. **The tongue... cleaveth to the roof**—The most graphic and fearfully expressive feature of the common misery is brought to view in this unnatural conduct of parents, leaving the sucking child and young children to famish for want of proper nutriment.

5. **They that did feed delicately**—Lived in daintiness and luxury. **Are desolate**—Perish of starvation, **in the streets**. **Brought up in scarlet**—Literally, *were carried on purple, or scarlet*, (that is, as children,) have now no resting place but **dung hills**. One of the most vivid of all the passages reflecting the national distress.

6. **The punishment**—The margin, *iniquity*, is to be preferred. The sin of the daughter of my people is greater than the sin of Sodom. The contrast in favour of Sodom's punishment consisted, 1) In the suddenness of her overthrow, **as in a moment**; 2) In that its overthrow came direct from God without the intervention of human agency. **No hands stayed**

on her. 7 Her Nazarites were purer than snow, they were whiter than milk, they were more ruddy in body than rubies, their polishing *was* of sapphire: 8 Their visage is ⁱ *darker than blackness*; they are not known in the streets: ^j their skin cleaveth to their bones; it is withered, it is become like a stick. 9 *They that be slain with the sword are better than they that be slain with hunger*: for these ^k *pine away*, stricken through for want of the fruits of the field. 10 ^l The hands of the ^m *pitiful women* have sodden their own children: they were their

ⁱ 3 Heb. *darker than blackness*. — ^j Chap. 5, 10; Joel 2, 6; Nahum 2, 10. — ^k Psa. 102, 5. — ^l 4 Heb. *flow out*. — ^m Chap. 2, 20. — ⁿ Isa. 49, 15.

on her—More literally, *no hands went round in her*.

7. **Nazarites**—Men specially devoted to the service of religion. Such an order of men is recognised and regulated in the Mosaic law, but not called into existence by it. They are mentioned here as specially representative of the nation's life. **Rubies**—Rather, *corals*. Delitzsch (*Psychology*, page 75) refers to this place and Song of Sol. v, 10, in proof that red on white—the normal colour of the human complexion—is the prime colour of beauty.—Dean Smith. But who knows this to be the normal colour of the human complexion? And how does such a passage prove it the prime colour of beauty? **Their polishing**—More literally, *their form of sapphire*. "The point of comparison is not the colour, but the luminosity, of this precious stone."—Keil.

It would seem that the Nazarites were mentioned as illustrating the sad and painful contrast which the times had wrought. When Israel was at peace and prosperous these, who perhaps were specially set apart to works of religion or charity, were perfect specimens of physical wellbeing: but in the following verses we have grouped together fearfully expressive features of their starvation and disease. It is proper, however, to say that Keil, Gesenius, and Nögelsbach take a different view of this word Nazarites, and translate *princes* or *crowned ones*.

10. A still more terrible feature is added, **Pitiful women have sodden their own children**—"Pitiful"—ten-

meat in the destruction of the daughter of my people. **11** The Lord hath accomplished his fury; he hath poured out his fierce anger, and hath kindled a fire in Zion, and it hath devoured the foundations thereof. **12** The kings of the earth, and all the inhabitants of the world, would not have believed that the adversary and the enemy should have entered into the gates of Jerusalem.

13 For the sins of her prophets, and the iniquities of her priests, that have shed the blood of the just in the midst of her, **14** They have wandered as

m Deut. 28, 57; 2 Kings 6, 29. — *n* Jer. 7, 20. — *o* Deut. 32, 22; Jer. 21, 14. — *p* Jer. 5, 31; 6, 13; 14, 14; 23, 11, 31; Ezek. 22, 26, 28; Zeph. 3, 4. — *q* Matt. 23, 31, 37. — *r* Jer. 2, 31.

der hearted, compas-ionate. "Sodden" — cooked or boiled. Josephus gives a horrible account of a like misery in the siege of Jerusalem under Titus.

11. Hath devoured the foundations—As the foundations of the city were not literally destroyed at that time, Dr. Hornblower suggests that this is a prophecy of the more complete demolition of the city in later times, when not "one stone should be left upon another." But there is no need of pressing this language. It implies total overthrow, but no importance attaches to the specification of "foundations" as that the threat must be literally fulfilled.

SUFFERINGS OF THE PROPHETS AND PRIESTS, 12-16.

12. Would not have believed—The city had indeed been previously captured by Shishak, king of Egypt, (1 Kings xiv, 25, 26,) and Joash, king of Israel, (2 Kings xiv, 13, 14,) but it had since been more strongly fortified, so as to be thought impregnable. Even now its capture had cost Nebuchad-rezzar a most protracted and expensive siege.

13. Sins of her prophets—As in the time of Christ, the religious leaders of the people were also their leaders in sin and rebellion. In Jer. xxvi. we have an illustration of this in that they attempted to silence Jeremiah by putting him to death. One of the saddest commentaries on the capability of our nature for evil is furnished in the conspicuous fact of history, that the bit-

blind men in the streets, they have polluted themselves with blood, so that men could not touch their garments.

15 They cried unto them, Depart ye; it is unclean: depart, depart, touch not: when they fled away and wandered, they said among the heathen, They shall no more sojourn there. **16** The anger of the Lord hath divided them; he will no more regard them: they respected not the persons of the priests, they favoured not the elders. **17** As for us, our eyes as yet failed for our vain help: in our watching we have watched

5 Or, in that they could not but touch. — *s* Num. 19, 16. — *6 Or, ye polluted.* — *t* Lev. 13, 45. — *7 Or, face.* — *u* Chap. 3, 12. — *v* 2 Kings 24, 7; Isa. 20, 5; 30, 6, 7; Jer. 37, 7; Ezek. 29, 16.

terest persecutions of the just have proceeded from men of the holiest professions. The direst crimes have been committed in the name of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost.

14. They have wandered, etc. — Namely, those same prophets and priests. Some understand by this that they wandered or staggered as if in phrensy, "intoxicated with blood that had been shed." Others, with better reason, find here the judgment of God by which they are made to reel in helplessness as blind men. This accords better with the concluding sentence, which represents them to be objects of general abhorrence. Defiled with blood, so that men could not touch their garments.

15. And so the people call out to them in the streets as to lepers. **Depart ye**—"Distance!" **Unclean**—Even among the heathen they are cast out and abhorred, for when they betake themselves thither it is only to meet the declaration, **They shall no more sojourn there.**

16. The anger, etc.—Better, *the face of Jehovah hath scattered them.*

THE VAIN TRUSTS OF THE PEOPLE, 17-20.

17. As for us—This translation is based on the Keri, which is not to be preferred to the written text. A literal version would be: *Still do our eyes pine away for our vain help. In our watching*—Gesenius, Furst, Nägelsbach, and many others translate,

for a nation *that* could not save *us*.

18 "They hunt our steps, that we cannot go in our streets: our end is near, our days are fulfilled; for "our end is come.

19 Our persecutors are "swifter than the eagles of the heaven: they pursued us upon the mountains, they laid wait for us in the wilderness.

20 The "breath of our nostrils, the anointed of the LORD, "was taken in their pits, of whom we said, Under his shadow we shall live among the heathen.

21 "Rejoice and be glad, O daughter of Edom, that dwellest in the land of Uz; "the cup also shall pass through

unto thee: thou shalt be drunken, and shalt make thyself naked.

22 "The punishment of thine iniquity is accomplished, O daughter of Zion; he will no more carry thee away into captivity: "he will visit thine iniquity, O daughter of Edom; he will "discover thy sins.

CHAPTER V.

REMEMBER, "O LORD, what is come upon us: consider, and behold "our reproach. **2** "Our inheritance is turned to strangers, our houses to aliens. **3** We are orphans and fatherless, our mothers are as widows. **4** We have drunken

m 2 Kings 25. 4, 5.—*n* Ezek. 7. 2, 3, 6; Amos 8. 2.—*o* Deut. 28. 49; J. r. 4. 13.—*p* Gen. 2. 7; chap. 2. 9.—*q* Jer. 52. 9; Ezek. 12. 13; 19. 4, 8.—*r* Like Eccles. 11. 9.—*s* Jer. 25. 15, 16, 21;

Obad. 10.—*t* Isa. 40. 2.—*8* Or, *Thine iniquity*.—*u* Psa. 137. 7.—*9* Or, *carry thee captive for thy sins*.—*a* Psa. 89. 50, 51.—*b* Psa. 79. 4; chap. 2. 15.—*c* Psa. 79. 1.

on the watch tower. The sense is not materially changed by this rendering, and there are difficulties in the way of it. On the whole, the present Version is to be preferred.

18. They hunt our steps—The word for "hunt" does not mean to pursue game so much as to watch for, to ensnare, to wait in ambush. The reference is to the time of the capture and sack of the city. The inhabitants could not escape, for whenever they appeared in the streets they were at once captured.

19. And even those who did succeed in escaping from the city were not materially better off. The enemy pursued us upon the mountains, they laid wait for us in the wilderness—So was Zedekiah captured, Jer. xxxix, 5, as the following verse narrates.

20. The breath of our nostrils—A designation of the king; in this instance Zedekiah, but applicable to the true king, whoever might be the anointed of the Lord. He is here described as captured like a wild animal, in their pits.

LIGHT AT EVENING, 21, 22.

21. Rejoice and be glad, O daughter of Edom—A manifestly ironical exclamation. He who tauntingly called out, "What of the night?" shall in the end realize that the "morning cometh" to Israel, and

then it will be night to their foes, of which Edom was one of the chiefest. **Dwellest in the land of Uz**—A hint as to the locality of Uz.

22. The punishment, etc.—Literally, *Thine iniquity is ended*. The punishment of Jerusalem was completed.

CHAPTER V.

THE GENERAL DISTRESS, 1-7.

1. What is come—Better, *what hath happened to us*. This is more fully explained by the term **reproach**; and this, in turn, by the sad recital which follows.

2. Our inheritance...to strangers—This has a woful meaning to the Jew. The land was to him the special gift of God, and his occupation of it a visible proof of the faithful covenant of Jehovah. For **aliens**, then, to gain possession of their **inheritance** and their **houses** was violently to annul this covenant, and so to take away their faith as well as their possessions.

3. Fatherless—*Without a father*. Many expositors find here a specific meaning, and understand by the term father, king; and others understand by **mothers**, the cities of Judah. But this is unnecessary, not to say puerile. The meaning simply is: We are desolate and bereaved, like children without parents, or a wife mourning the loss of her husband.

our water for money; our wood¹ is sold unto us. **2** ^dOur necks are under persecution: we labour, and have no rest. **6** ^aWe have given the hand ¹to the Egyptians, and to the Assyrians, to be satisfied with bread. **7** ^eOur fathers have sinned, and ^hare not; and we have borne their iniquities. **8** ⁱServants have ruled over us: *there is none that doth deliver us out of their hand.* **9** We gat

¹ Heb. *cometh for price*.—² Heb. *On our necks are we persecuted*.—^d Deut. 28, 48; Jer. 28, 11.—^e Gen. 24, 2; Jer. 50, 15.—^f Hosea 12, 1.—^g Jer. 31, 29; Ezek. 18, 2.

4. Our water for money, etc.—These are illustrations of the hardships they were experiencing. Such absolute necessities of life could be had by them only on the payment of money. And what greatly enhanced the bitterness of this complaint was, that they had to buy what was rightfully their own. In this not only is there distress and hardship, but a sense of degradation and wrong.

5. Our necks are under persecution, etc.—More literally, *On our necks we are persecuted*. That is, our pursuers follow us so closely as to be on our very necks. **We labour**—Rather, *are wearied*, a necessary consequence of this hot and relentless pursuit.

6. We have given the hand—Namely, as a sign of submission and subjection, in order to procure bread.

7. Our fathers... we have borne their iniquities—They sinned, but died before the times were ripe for the punishment of the nation, hence we suffer for their sins. Not that they themselves were innocent, but they suffer not only for their own sins but also for those of their progenitors.

INDIVIDUALIZING ILLUSTRATIONS, 8-18.

8. Servants (slaves) have ruled over us—Who were these "servants?" The Chaldean soldiers, servants of Nebuchadrezzar, (Rosenmüller, etc.;) the Chaldeans, but recently tributary to the Assyrians, (Kalt-schmidt, quoted by Keil;) the Chaldean satraps, servants of the king of Babylon, (Ewald;) slaves employed as overseers and task-masters of the captives on the march, (Nägelsbach.) Bet-

ter is it to recognise in the word a bitter allusion to the fact that in oriental countries, at this time, it was not unusual for slaves to come to high office, as is illustrated in the cases of Joseph and Daniel. In a rude and comparatively unorganized condition of society personal skill and physical prowess sometimes overbear all other considerations, and bring their possessors to places of power.

^h Gen. 42, 13; Zech. 1, 5.—ⁱ Neh. 5, 15.—^k Job 30, 30; Psa. 119, 83; chap. 4, 8.—³ Or, *terrors*, or, *storms*.—^l Isa. 15, 16; Zech. 14, 2.—^m Isa. 47, 6; chap. 4, 16.—ⁿ Judges 16, 21.

9. Sword of the wilderness—This alludes to the predatory Bedouins, who sometimes strip a whole district of its herds and its harvests in a single day.

10. Our skin was black—The word rendered "black" occurs in three other passages, namely, in Gen. xliii, 30, and 1 Kings iii, 26, in both which places it is translated "yearned;" and in Hosea xi, 8, where it is rendered "kindled." The use of the word **oven**, or furnace, seems decisive for this last sense in this place; though Fürst says, "The explanation of Kimchi, 'to grow warm,' is only conjectural." The allusion is to the fever produced by famine, and the clause should read, *Our skin glows like an oven, because of the fever of famine*.

11-13. Ravished the women—In these verses we have individualizing illustrations of the unhappy lot of the people. The women are dishonoured, (literally, *humbled*;) **princes** are put to death and their dead bodies **hanged up by their hand** to expose them to public contumely. **The...elders were not honoured**—An utter violation of all that is most sacred in oriental life; and **young men and children** are put to the most servile work; literally,

elders have ceased from the gate, the young men from their music. **15** The joy of our heart is ceased; our dance is turned into mourning. **16** ^a The crown is fallen *from* our head: woe unto us, that we have sinned! **17** For this ^b our heart is faint; ^c for these *things* our eyes are dim. **18** Because of the mountain of Zion, which is desolate, the foxes

^a Job 19. 9; Psa. 89. 39. — ^b Heb. *The crown of our head is fallen.* — ^c Chap. 1. 22. — ^d Psa. 6. 7; chap. 2. 11. — ^e Psa. 9. 7; 10. 16; 29. 10; 90. 2; 102. 12, 26, 27; 145. 13; Hab. 1. 12.

they bear the mill and fall under the wood.

14. From the gate—The place for rest and recreation, for business and social converse. In a land in which there were no public houses or public baths the gates were ordinarily the only available places of common resort.

16. The crown is fallen—The grand summing up of all their disgrace and misery.

18. The foxes walk upon it—J cka's, who live among ruins and shun the presence of man. Hence there is in this a vivid suggestion of the utter desolation which had come to "Zion, the perfection of beauty."

THE PRAYER, 19-22.

19. Thou... remainest for ever—Nothing could be more fitting or more impressive than this pathetic appeal to

walk upon it. **19** Thou, O LORD, ^a remainest for ever; ^b thy throne from generation to generation. **20** ^c Wherefore dost thou forget us for ever, and forsake us ^d so long time? **21** ^e Turn thou unto thee, O LORD, and we shall be turned; renew our days as of old. **22** ^f Because thou hast utterly rejected us; thou art very wroth against us.

^a Psalm 45. 6. — ^b Psalm 13. 1. — ^c 5 Hebrew *for length of days.* — ^d Psalm 80. 3, 7, 11. — ^e Jerem'ah 31. 18. — ^f Or, *For wilt thou utterly reject us?*

the immutable sovereignty of Jehovah. Men may die, institutions may fall, kingdoms may come to a perpetual end, but the resources of God are unexhausted, his throne standeth forever from generation to generation. And if God lives his people cannot die. The head is above the water the boat cannot be drowned.

"Under the shadow of his throne,
Still may we dwell secure."

He who sitteth eternally enthroned will not forget for ever his own people. And yet this hope and confidence does not "rise to the heights of joyous victory, but, as Gerlach expresses himself, 'merely glimmers from afar, like the morning star through the clouds which does not, indeed, itself dispel the shadows of the night, though it announces that the rising of the sun is near, and that it shall obtain the victory.'"—*Keil*.

THE END

16970

BS
1151
W4
1889
V.7

THEOLOGY LIBRARY
SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY
AT CLAREMONT
CLAREMONT, CALIFORNIA

23-262-002

16970

